

THE TIMES

opes fade for 99 oilmen still missing from North Sea platform

ember of dead in the oil rig in the North risen to 38 with 99 still missing. Most of re feared trapped in

living quarters 100 feet below the surface. Rescue operations are continuing but there is little hope of survivors among the trapped men.

Divers are on standby after tapping round the rig's legs: there was no response. Mr Odvar Nordli, the Prime Minister of Norway, said the disaster was one of the greatest tragedies in the recent history of Norway. He promised a committee of inquiry would be set up.

Set of ships and helicopters search area round sunken rig

olas Timmins
March 28
ed diving ships are to be sent to the living quarters of the oil accommodation Alexander L. Kielland, one of the worst rig disasters to 38 with 99 people.

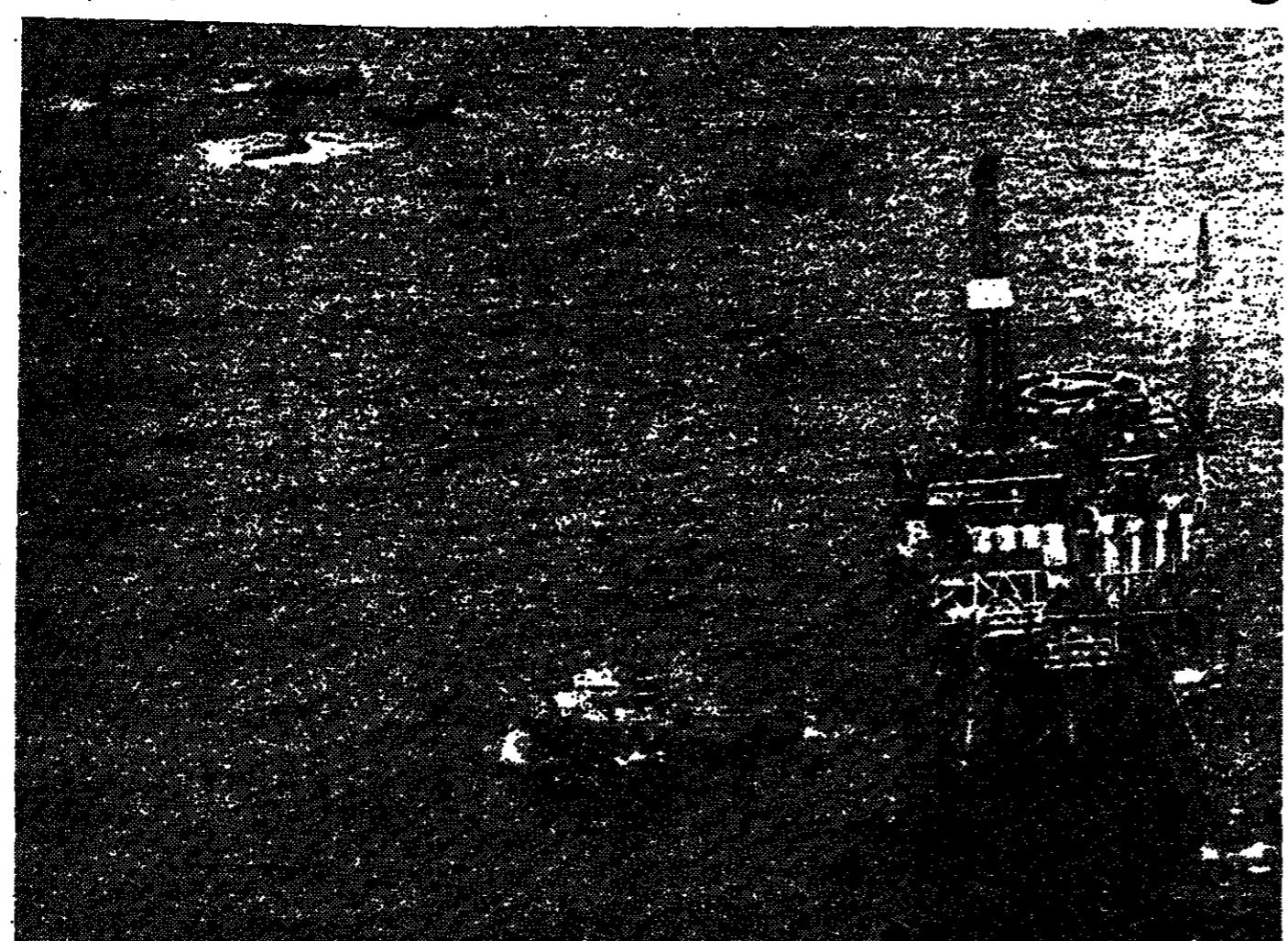
l Wendt, Chief of Stavanger, said that were known to be on the 228 ft Phillips Company believed to be on the rig when it gale force winds of were last night. got bodies to an hour. The fact is that the missing have been the accommodation the 10,105 ton semi-rig, which are now feet below water. 15 of the crew are British and about 15, with a Portuguese, a Spaniard and three

It refused to give the of the dead or the although half a tons are believed to be in Stavanger. of the survivors were hospital, few with any iles, apart from around 20 have already erged. of 45 vessels and 23 and other aircraft the area for survivors the chances of any found seem slim. survivors have been night. Helicopters the last few from a

speculation that any the rig may be in pockets, Mr Per a spokesman for which the rig was id: "It isn't easy to y high hopes for within the Alexander

rafts have already 10 ft long, remaining platform, but there no response. Telephones have also been hundred feet below e to look into the riers. survivors are in the fities are formidable.

Grosch, aged 41, a supervisor flying a Seaway Eagle, one dive support vessels a, said: "Honesty it me. If anybody was out they would be one still inside the old have got hypoxy". the accommodation, far below the sur would be severe he said. or like sitting in an boat on the surface" such who has been in ice 1965, said he had to tackle anything "There is no blueprint



Four legs of the Alexander Kielland remain afloat (top left) beside the Albuskje platform.

for dealing with a rig that is upside down whatsoever."

There was talk of people being in air pockets and the rig being cut open to get them out. But he said: "As soon as you cut it open, you let the air out. We will just have to see what the conditions are and what it is like."

Tonight six aircraft including three from the RAF searched until nightfall with two long-distance surveillance planes operating throughout the night.

Four naval vessels were in the area, including the British fishery protection vessel HMS Lutefis and Mr Wendt said that 10 Sea King helicopters would continue the search tomorrow, two of them from Britain.

A spokesman for Phillips said that a tug had got a rope on to the platform, which has stabilized in improved weather, with the wind down to 15 knots and waves only five to six feet high. Weather reports say conditions will worsen during the night.

Phillips also said that a vessel had got a line attached to the rig that broke off and it was now under control. The anchors holding the capsized rig in

place were being strengthened, to keep it in place.

Mr Arne Glæsne, the inspector of rescue operations, said the temperature in the sea was four to six degrees above freezing, but anyone in the sea without any special protection would last only a few minutes.

"If they have a survival suit and are in a liferaft or something like that, the chances of surviving are, of course, much greater," he said.

None of those picked up from

the water were in survival suits. All had been wearing ordinary clothing.

The first survivors were pulled from the heaving seas, shortly after the accident, in a stores basket lowered from the Edda platform, which was only a short distance from the Alexander Kielland.

Mr Bjartmar Gjerde, the Norwegian Oil Minister, said: "We have not given up hope of finding those who are listed as missing."

RAF rescue man bravely risks his life

Flight Sergeant Mike Yarwood of the RAF helicopter rescue service was last night being hailed as a hero of the North Sea rescue. He twice jumped into the freezing mountainous waters, detaching himself from his line, to save numbered and shivering survivors (The Press Association reports).

His helicopter captain finally ordered him to rest. "He died like someone possessed, beyond the call of duty," Flight Lt Bob Nevile said. "It was our decision that he was too exhausted to go on. He was not of the same opinion."

Sgt Yarwood, aged 33, married with two children from Norwood, Cheshire, a veteran of 70 rescues, is winchman with the helicopter from RAF Boulmer, in Northumberland.

At the other end of the which was Flight Sgt John Moody, also 33, married with two children from Reading, Berkshire. They found a liferaft with 10 Norwegians and as no ship was near decided to winch them up.

It was very difficult to maintain the hover. They were the worst conditions you could get—bad visibility, cross winds, high seas, and a very small target."

Other reports and photographs

As Flight Sgt Yarwood swung the men below could not grab his rope because their hands were so cold. So the RAF rescuer jumped into the sea.

He swam to the lifeboat to help the desperate men adrift for three hours. It took the helicopter crew 45 minutes to lift them off.

Spotting another life raft, the rescuers returned and again Flight Sgt Yarwood dropped into the sea. The dazed survivors were too weak to be winched up and so a ship was sent to pick them up.

In New York, Bach's shares were suspended for 10 days, while the firm requested that market trading in silver futures—commitment to buy silver some time ahead—be suspended. The request was turned down by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC).

The first was to reduce Britain's gross contribution as agreed at the Dublin summit. At the time the reduction of £350m offered by other EEC members was said by Mrs Thatcher to be much too small.

However, since then the British have moved towards the idea of securing cuts in their net contribution through increasing

silver price.

The Prime Minister said yesterday that this could come only after the Government had proved that it was committed to its money supply targets and had fulfilled them.

Wide agreement after Thatcher-Schmidt talks on EEC budget

By Caroline Atkinson

Mrs Thatcher and Herr Helmut Schmidt, the West German Chancellor, said yesterday that they were now much more convinced that a solution could be found to the problem of Britain's £1,300m contribution to the EEC budget.

Addressing a joint press conference with the Chancellor after a day and a half of discussions at Chequers, Mrs Thatcher implied that there would be progress towards a solution before the postponed EEC summit takes place towards the end of April.

However, Herr Schmidt emphasized that the solution must come with a package of measures. This should also deal with fishing, lamb, energy policy and the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy.

So far Mrs Thatcher had always held that the British budget problem should be treated on its own. But yesterday she said that the British must contribute to solving the problems of other EEC countries while seeking a just solution to their own problems. Nevertheless, the Prime Minister hinted that the budget question should be solved first. She suggested that the outstanding quarrel over fishing, for example, would longer to deal with. All the EEC problems should be examined at the same time, she said, but they would not necessarily be solved together.

Herr Schmidt emphasized that the Germans would not act as mediators in winning French agreement. If there was ill will between Britain and France, they must solve it themselves, he stated.

The Prime Minister said that there was clearly a way of solving the problem of Britain's budget contribution within the Community rules. She suggested that the three weeks before the summit should be used for intensive efforts to reach agreement. All that was needed was good will to attach firms to the method.

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It seems increasingly unlikely that Britain will decide to join the European Monetary System of fixed exchange rates in the near future. Even the Foreign Office is now thought to be convinced that with the present strength of the pound it would be damaging for Britain to go in now. However, the Treasury ministers may have modified their complete opposition to entry and may be willing to agree in principle to join at some later date.

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HOME NEWS

Settlement of local authority pay dispute means lifting of threat to air travel over Easter

By David Felton
Labour Reporter

The dispute involving 550,000 white-collar local authority workers was called off last night after a 13 per cent pay offer was accepted by the National and Local Government Officers' Association (Nalgo).

Negotiators immediately gave warning that they would be pressing for a further 20 per cent pay rise in July.

The settlement averted a strike by air traffic controllers at 12 municipal airports over Easter. It also means that rate demands, which have been halted in many areas, will start going out from Monday.

Rent collection, which has been disrupted in some areas, will also return to normal. The union had also threatened a strike among meat inspectors in abattoirs.

The deal with Nalgo was struck within half an hour yesterday, after day-long talks on Wednesday led the employers to increase their offer on comparability payments from an average 8 per cent to 13 per cent. The union had been

claiming 14 per cent. The money will be backdated to January 1.

Increases range from 9.5 per cent, or £189 a year, for a new entrant aged 16 doing clerical work, to 18 per cent or £176 a year for some chief officers and departmental heads.

Mr Sidney Dennett, chairman of the employers' side, said: "To local government this is an expensive settlement at a time when there is great pressure on public spending."

If local government is spending at a faster rate than there is money flowing in, then there are grave problems ahead. So much of local government expenditure is concerned with staff costs, so there is a direct relationship to the numbers of staff employed."

It was, he added, too early to say whether there would be any job losses as a result of the settlement, which is in addition to the 9.4 per cent the workers received as the first part of their annual deal last July. But it is difficult to see how the employers can do anything but offer a similar deal to the chief executives.

recovering the cost: extra rates, reduced services, and increased efficiency which meant job staff reductions.

Mr Rusbridge thought the settlement was fair and just and that the dispute had caused a relatively small amount of damage because it had been stopped so quickly.

A warning about the battle ahead in the summer on the next pay round was sounded by Mr Alan Jenkinson, Nalgo's national officer. He said the difficulty would arise when the union tried to keep pace with the rate of inflation, which would be about 20 per cent, at a time when the Government had set a 13 per cent cash limit for local government.

One difficulty on the horizon is the decision by council chief executives to reject an offer of about 8 per cent for comparability. However, with chief officers having negotiated a 17 per cent settlement and yesterday's 13 per cent deal, it is difficult to see how the employers can do anything but offer a similar deal to the chief executives.

It was, he added, too early to say whether there would be any job losses as a result of the settlement, which is in addition to the 9.4 per cent the workers received as the first part of their annual deal last July. But it is difficult to see how the employers can do anything but offer a similar deal to the chief executives.

Labour Party national executive split over financing of Far East tour

By Michael Hattfield
Political Reporter

Mr James Callaghan, Leader of the Opposition, is at the centre of a storm building up inside the Labour Party national executive over his planned two-week visit to China in May.

The argument involves both the political wisdom of his visit and the financing of the party accompanying him. To complete matters, the political argument shows clear divisions among the Left which controls the national executive committee.

Strong opposition to Mr Callaghan's visit was voiced this week by Mr Norman Atkinson, treasurer of the party, who took the view that it would support anti-Soviet opinion in the country and would lend credibility to the posture of China in world affairs.

Among those who supported him at a meeting of the national executive was Miss Joan Maynard (Sheffield, Brightside); but Mr Callaghan headed off any general disagreement by stating that he had discussed the matter with the Russian Ambassador in London, who had raised no objections.

Others on the Left, however, while accepting the fact that they could not oppose the visit by the Leader of the Opposition, are questioning where the money is coming from to finance the tour.

The answer appears to be, according to well-informed sources, private and unannounced contributions which are being made by some trade unions to assist the Leader of the Opposition in the running of his office.

Behind the financial argument lies an unresolved dispute between Mr Callaghan and the national executive as to who should control the state financial aid which is given to Opposition parties.

It was first provided under a Labour Government when Lord Glenimara of Gleadhing, Cumbria, (formerly Mr Edward Short), was Leader of the House.

The Labour Opposition now receives £165,000 a year, which is divided with the agreement of the Shadow Cabinet and the parliamentary party, in the following way: £65,000 to Mr Callaghan's office, £50,000 to parliamentary party; and the rest divided between Opposition

spokesmen in the Lords and the financing of advisers to shadow ministers.

The national executive, which has fought to win control of the money, is to raise the issue once again.

Mr Callaghan has clearly put the cat among the pigeons this week by suggesting that Mr Ron Hayward, general secretary of the party, should accompany him on the China visit.

The national executive, by a small majority, agreed that the party should pay for Mr Hayward. But this decision is now to be challenged at a meeting in two weeks of the party's international committee. Some of its members were protesting last night that they had never been consulted and that they would block any move to have the cost taken from the party's international budget.

Apart from Mr Hayward, whose visit is likely to cost the party about £1,000, the NEC members involved were questioning whether Mr Callaghan was financing the tour through so-called "Short" money. The official version is as follows:

Mr Callaghan is an official guest of China and his flight expenses will be covered by the suspicions of the Left with its obsessions over the real centre of power inside the party.

£17m aid for Liverpool regeneration

From Our Correspondent Liverpool

The Liverpool Partnership Committee, a joint project between the Government and the city council, is to receive a £17m grant for the next 12 months to assist in the regeneration of the inner city area.

The committee, one of five inner-city committees set up by a Labour Government, will receive two more grants, each £225,000, one for existing programmes, the other for voluntary work.

The details were announced in Liverpool yesterday by Mr Michael Heseltine, the Environment Secretary, after he had chaired the fourth meeting of the committee since it took office.

Four projects are to receive special attention: the Chinese Community Centre; the restoration of the Empire Theatre; the Maritime Park project on the waterfront at the pier head; and cycle lanes in the Toxteth and Vauxhall districts.

Home of the great and famous goes public again

From John Young Romsey, Hampshire

Lord Mountbatten of Be

Broadlands, home of the

late Mountbatten of

and without doubt one of

loveliest houses in Englan

to reopen to the public

Tuesday.

It was opened for the

time less than a year ago

only a few weeks before

Mountbatten's assassinat

Since then his grandso

Romsey, has spent about £5

on repairs and restoration.

Spells of sunshine yester

afternoon, after a rains

brought out the

public to Palla

gorgeous elegance. Spring

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parkland, and only a hu

yards away, beyond the im

lately kept laws, the river

was in full flood.

Yet despite its long as

it was owned by

Palmerston, and the Queen

the Duke of Edinburgh

their honeymoon there

The ornate deco

rooms are relatively smal

neatly proportioned, and

are no great echoing hal

draughts possible.

Remember of Lord M

batten's illustrious antec

and equally distinguished

careers are everywhere,

memorials of Russia,

and many royalties to a cabin

of polo trophies; from

Coronation books of the

Alexander II, Alexander II

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swords presented to the

mander in Chief, South

Asia, at the end of the la

The enigma from HMS

is seen on the way to a

photographic display of h

and achievements. But soc

ial feel for collecting in

that a whole new exhib

is to be opened in a stable

next year.

Lord Romsey said the

reason for opening the

was simply inflation, and he

could not possibly afford

so. For a long time it

far too beautiful to have

on display its charms at

public gaze.

The house and garden

open to the public from

to 6 pm daily (except Mon

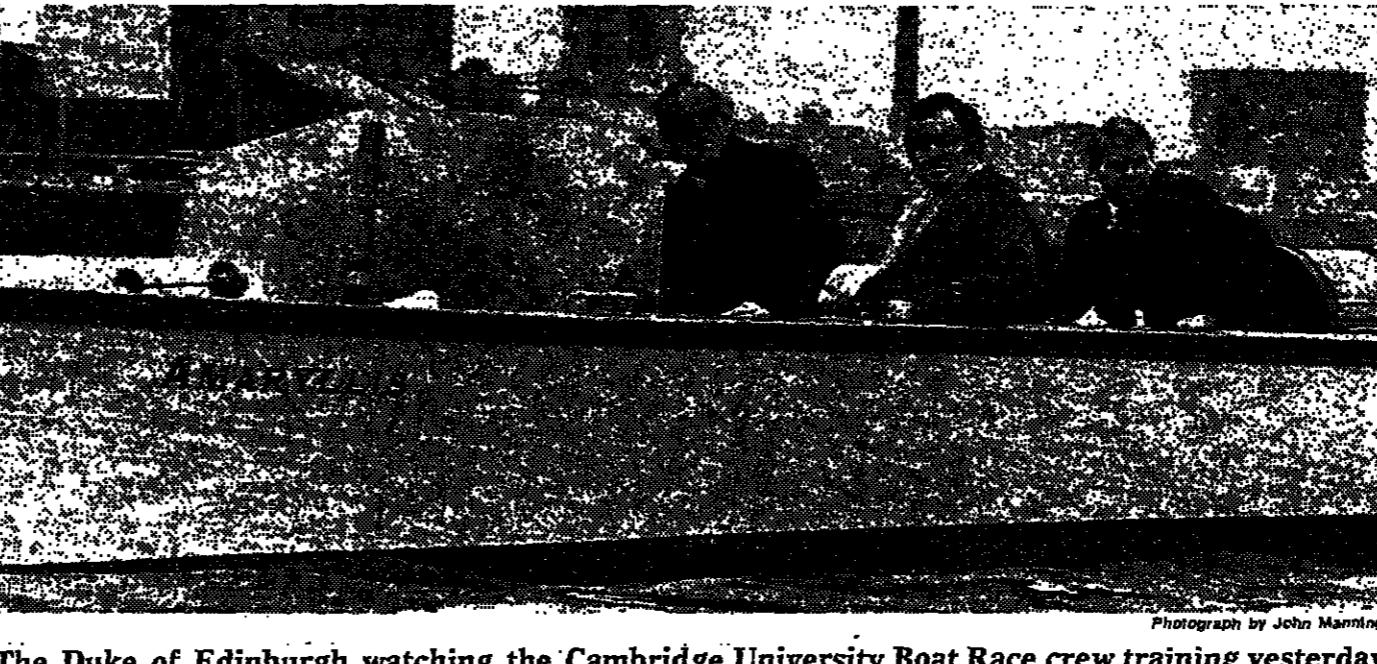
from April to September

five, Monday closing do

during the months of A

and September.

Manor for nation, p



The Duke of Edinburgh watching the Cambridge University Boat Race crew training yesterday at Putney for next Saturday's annual Thames race.

A famous fighting ship that never fired in anger

Time puts paid to the Ark Royal

By Henry Sunhouse

Defence Correspondent

The Ark Royal, which never fired a shot in anger during 23 years' service with the fleet, has finally lost its battle for survival.

The Ministry of Defence has decided that the aircraft carrier of 50,000 tons, the biggest British warship of its generation, is to be broken for scrap.

Thus ends 16 months of indecision since the Ark was paid off in December 1978, during which time the ministry has evaluated a number of proposals from hopeful entrepreneurs who have wanted to save the ship from the scrapyard.

The Ministry of Defence has decided that the aircraft carrier of 50,000 tons, the biggest British warship of its generation, is to be broken for scrap.

It has been haunted, as always, by the fear that a famous vessel might become in a few years a rusting hulk, the funds and enthusiasm of her new owners exhausted.

The Ark Royal, the last aircraft carrier to be broken up, fended off the scuppering by being converted into a floating museum and monument for the Royal Navy.

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HOME NEWS

Demand for action at 'black spots' to cut health risk from leadBy Pearce Wright
Science Editor

A Department of Health working party on the effect of lead on health has been unable to find conclusive, unambiguous evidence that small amounts of lead in petrol impair the intelligence and behaviour of children.

In its report, published yesterday, the group recommends urgent action by the Government to combat certain black spots in Britain where there is a need to reduce the risk of lead from water pipes and storage tanks, domestic paint surfaces, and traffic and industrial air pollution.

The working party, composed of eminent physicians, psychologists, psychiatrists, and research scientists, was chaired by Professor P. J. Lawther, of St Bartholomew's Hospital, London.

Its conclusions, however, do not answer two of the central questions that were the reason for the investigation.

The introduction to the report says that the main question facing the group was the possibility that subtle adverse effects on health and development result from the absorption of lead in smaller quantities than those known to give behavioural signs. Recent reports suggest that lead might interfere with mental development or cause behavioural disorders in children.

The experts conclude that, although suggestive, the evidence is equivocal and difficult to assess.

The other unanswered question is how much of the 10,000 tonnes of lead put in petrol each year returns to our bodies. The group's recommendations emphasize the need for increased monitoring and for improvements in test procedures to measure the possible effects on children that can be attributed to exposure to lead as distinct from other poor environmental factors.

Priority action is urged in areas with high levels of lead in tap water, where chemical treatment is insufficient. If necessary, old lead plumbing should be bypassed or replaced, especially where tap water may be used in infants' feeds. People in those houses should avoid using the first run-off water for drinking or cooking.

Investigations of the lead levels in old paint coatings accessible to young children, especially in depressed city areas, is another matter of urgency, the report says. A progressive reduction of lead emission from traffic and industrial sources should be undertaken. In places where exposure is continuous and prolonged, special measures are needed to keep the annual mean concentration of lead in the air below two micrograms a cubic metre.

The report contains a special



Parents parading with an anti-lead poster in Whitehall yesterday. Photograph by Bill Warhurst

list of recommendations for improved research and monitoring. In particular, the report blood level found to be over 35 micrograms a decileile should be followed up to trace the source of exposure. That tiny concentration of lead in blood is below the level at which overt lead poisoning can be clearly diagnosed. However, the experts have agreed that there is no convincing evidence of deleterious effects below 35 micrograms a decileile. Symptoms of lead poison-

stinate in Whitehall yesterday to voice their discontent at the report, which they described as a waste of public money (the Press Association reports).

In a statement they said the working party was "a transparent attempt to cover up and serve the interests of the oil companies well". They asked why it had omitted studies of foetal damage, still-births and neonatal deaths.

"Cover-up" charge: Housewives belonging to the Parents Against Lead group picketed the Royal United Services In-

WEST EUROPE
Ambassador
defends
commitment
to EuropeFrom Charles Hargrove
Paris, March 28

Sir Reginald Hibbert, the British Ambassador, described as "highly artificial" and unjust the accusations being bandied about in France that Britain was not fully committed to the European Community.

If the pound rose any higher

to accede to Mr Walker's demands last night. He retaliated by refusing to agree to the renewal of the rules. But a spokesman for the European Commission said today that despite this the rules would continue to operate.

Mr Walker tried yesterday to get a change in the rules of the EEC's complex "green" currency system which would have led to the imposition from the beginning of next week of a tax on food imports into Britain to offset the rising value of the pound.

Sterling's appreciation, Mr Walker claimed, had put British food exporters at a disadvantage compared with their continental competitors, and he wanted the immediate application of an import tax and export subsidy to the advantage of farmers and traders.

Under the rules the tax would not come into effect until the pound had risen at least 2.5 per cent above the artificial "green" rate used for translating the EEC's common farm prices (fixed in units of account) into sterling. At present the pound is just below that level.

Other member states refused

Cheaper food imports survive efforts to impose special taxFrom Michael Hornsby
Brussels, March 28

British consumers will continue to benefit from cheaper food imports as a result of the appreciation of the pound on foreign exchange markets, but they do not have Mr Peter Walker, the Minister of Agriculture, to thank for this relief.

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Other member states refused

Court postpones ruling on French lamb banFrom Hugh Clayton
Agriculture Correspondent

The European Court of Justice ruled yesterday against an interim injunction which would force France to drop restrictions against imports of British lamb. The news was greeted by the Ministry of Agriculture in London with a curt statement that France should nevertheless obey Community law immediately.

The court ruled last September that French bans on British lamb imports were illegal. The court has now followed the advice early this week of Signor Francesco Caporaso, Advocate-General of the EEC, who decided that an injunction might prejudice the definitive ruling which is expected from the court later.

MP seeks Debendox ban after US verdictBy Annabel Ferriman
Health Services Correspondent

A call for the suspension of Debendox, the pill for morning sickness, which was blamed for causing birth defects, was made yesterday by Dr David Ennals, Labour MP for Norwich, North, and former secretary of State for Social Services.

Mr Ennals said that he found extraordinary that the company which made the drug did not think that the court verdict in Orlando, Florida, in my view, be responsible.

Mr Ennals, who was speaking at a conference of the society for Drug Research at Kent University, said that in spite of the Thalidomide tragedy the taking of non-essential drugs during pregnancy had not decreased in the last 10 years.

"A survey published in 1977 indicated that in Britain doctors prescribed drugs for 56 per cent of women in the first three months of pregnancy, and an astounding 97 per cent of women received some sort of medication during the nine months.

"I sometimes think we have gone pill mad in Britain. The public seem to believe that there is a pill for every ill and GPs too often go along with the theory. The quickest way to end a consultation is to write out a prescription", he said.

"The attitude of the Department of Health and Social Security is no less puzzling. A spokesman said last Saturday: 'The mere fact of the verdict does not make that much

Action by Sir Peter Scott settled

Settlement of a court action by Sir Peter Scott, the naturalist, against the author and publishers of a book about his father, Captain Robert Falcon Scott, the explorer, was announced yesterday by Sir Peter's solicitors.

Sir Peter issued a High Court writ last September seeking an injunction restraining Hodder and Stoughton, the publishers, from publishing Scott and Amundsen, by Roland Huntford.

'Speak-out' advice by Archbishop

The Christian voice must be loud and clear on the political issues of our time, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Rev Robert Runcie, said yesterday.

In an address after his induction as president of the British Council of Churches at Swanscombe, he said that some of the issues he had in mind were race relations, unemployment, disarmament, and the proper distribution of the world's resources.

"We have to realize that the problem of the starving, crying, pot-bellied African child in the Christmas poster will be solved not just by soft hearts, but also by hard heads and tough thinking and a readiness to ask awkward questions", he said.

Survey shows almost half of new cars had defectsBy Robin Young
Consumer Affairs Correspondent

Almost half the buyers of new cars in a survey carried out by the Office of Fair Trading claimed to have found faults in their car on delivery, the Director-General of Fair Trading revealed yesterday.

Mr Gordon Borrie told a trade seminar that motorists were still not being given a fair deal. He announced that the motor trade associations had agreed to strengthen the code of practice originally launched in February, 1976, but gave them a warning that unless "a great deal more" was done to enforce compliance the trade would be brought under legislative control.

He described the results of the Office of Fair Trading's survey among new car-buyers last year as "disappointing". More than one-sixth of those who responded to the survey claimed that their new car had been delivered by dealers with damage to the bodywork or paintwork. Two-fifths claimed their car had other faults on delivery.

Mr Borrie said these results suggested that dealers were not carrying out pre-delivery inspections thoroughly. Only one third of respondents could recall receiving or being shown the pre-delivery inspection checklist, although that was required under the code of practice.

The survey also suggested that the code provisions concerning conciliation and arbitration were a dead letter. Only

1 per cent of respondents with an unresolved dispute with their dealer could recall having been advised about the conciliation and arbitration procedures.

Mr Borrie said that compared with a similar survey carried out in 1977, it seemed fewer faults were developing in new cars during the first few months of warranty. None the less three-fifths of respondents still reported such defects.

The new car survey, the results of which Mr Borrie announced yesterday, is the latest in a series of monitoring exercises which have led him to express dissatisfaction with the way self-regulation in the motor trade is working.

The Office of Fair Trading is also concerned about deficient standards in repairs and servicing, and widespread malpractices in the sale of used vehicles which give rise to the largest number of consumer complaints.

In the year ending September, 1979, 8,400 complaints were reported by trading standards departments relating to the largest number of consumer complaints.

His office intended to embark on a thorough renegotiation of the motor code.

"Frankly, unless we can make really effective improvements, legislative controls may well become the only sensible alternative", Mr Borrie said.

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WEST EUROPE & OVERSEAS

Mugabe cold shoulder makes S Africans feel still more isolatedFrom Ray Kennedy
Johannesburg, March 28

South African MPs adjourned today for a 14-day Easter recess, bitterly aware that despite efforts by Mr Botha, the Prime Minister, to dominate southern Africa through his concept of a "constellation of States" their country is more isolated than ever.

This has been brought home by Mr Robert Mugabe's decision to omit South Africa from the guest list for Zimbabwe's independence celebrations next month.

Political sources in Cape Town said it was realized and understood that some of the 96 countries and organizations invited to watch the last remaining British flag in Africa hauled down at midnight on April 17 would certainly boycott the occasion if they had to share a platform with South African representatives.

But there is also a degree of feeling that South Africa played a more crucial role than anybody else in persuading Mr Ian Smith that majority rule was inevitable. Although it economically backed UDI, from the outset it also swayed totally behind Dr Henry Kissinger's efforts in 1976 which forced Mr Smith to give in.

Parliament has recessed half-way through an increasingly stormy six-month session which Mr Pieter Botha has sought to control with his "constellation of states" and "total strategy" ideas.

In a forceful rebuff of the recalcitrant right-wing of the ruling National Party, which opposes his moves to reform apartheid dogma, he has warned South Africans that it is time

Nkomo friends snubbed: Mr Robert Mugabe has obliquely snubbed his coalition partner, Mr Joshua Nkomo, in his list of invitations to the independence celebrations.

It omits East Germany, the biggest backer of Mr Nkomo's Zulu wing of the Patriotic Front alliance during the guerrilla war. Also omitted are Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and Vietnam, all of which were keen supporters of Mr Nkomo.

US plan to double aid for Zimbabwe to \$14m

From David Cross
Washington, March 28

The United States hopes to be able to provide an independent Zimbabwe with about \$14m (about £6,400,000) in immediate development aid.

Outlining Washington's future policy towards Zimbabwe, Mr Richard Moose, the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, has told Congress the Administration intends to double the amount of aid already approved. Earlier this year, Washington provided aid worth \$5m to help refugees settle in Zimbabwe after the civil war and a further \$2m for rural rehabilitation projects.

The new aid programme, which is expected to be announced shortly before the country's independence on April 18, would be used to build schools, clinics and other small infrastructure projects. This is in line with the wishes of Mr

Robert Mugabe, the Prime Minister designate.

In the longer term, the United States expects to have aid worth \$30m for southern Africa available in the 1980-81 fiscal year budget which begins on October 1. A large proportion of this could be earmarked for Zimbabwe.

Britain has already announced an immediate aid programme for Zimbabwe totalling between £7m and £8m. This is expected to be followed by more aid in due course.

Meanwhile, State Department officials said today that arrangements for the opening of an American embassy in Salisbury were making good progress.

The Administration was also cooperating with United States Chambers of Commerce to arrange visits by American businessmen to discuss investment opportunities in Zimbabwe.

Power struggles cause Thai Cabinet changesFrom Neil Kelly
Bangkok, March 28

Power struggles in his Cabinet have caused General Prime Minister, to reshuffle Prem Tinsulanonda, the Thai king posts only two weeks after the formation of his government.

A few hours before presenting his government's policy to Parliament, General Prem took over responsibility for foreign affairs, finance, security and agriculture, stripping his four deputy prime ministers of most of their powers.

General Prem, already Defence Minister and Commander-in-Chief of the Army, will now be, with his extra responsibilities, more of a one-man government than any Prime Minister since Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat, who ruled Thailand almost singlehanded from 1957 to 1963.

Two are hanged under Malaysia security lawsFrom Our Correspondent
Kuala Lumpur, March 28

Two more men were executed at Kuala Lumpur's Pudu prison this morning for offences under the country's tough security laws. This brings the total in 15 days to seven.

The Government has indicated its determination to go through with the executions of those whose appeals to the pardons board had been turned down, despite an appeal from the International Commission of Jurists, the Malaysian Bar Council and the opposition Democratic Action Party.

This morning, Chua Boon Heng, aged 26, and Law Tin Wah, aged 25, were hanged for illegal possession of arms and ammunition. All but two of the seven hanged so far were sentenced to death for similar offences.

Mrs Gandhi wins vote on dissolutionsFrom Richard Wigg
Delhi, March 28

With the help of some well-timed defections, Mrs Indira Gandhi's Congress Party last night obtained approval of the dissolution of nine state legislative assemblies in the Indian Upper House, hitherto dominated by the Opposition.

When the Prime Minister last month decided to dissolve the assemblies, her Congress Party mustered only some 70 seats in the Rajya Sabha. The opposition Janata Party still had a majority.

But in a preliminary vote last night the Government with the aid of those who had crossed the floor mustered 120 votes against 96. The opposition promptly walked out and final approval of the President's proclamation dissolving the assemblies came by voice vote. It had easily passed the Lower House the day before.

Games decision foolish, Minister says

The British Olympic Association's decision to send a team to Moscow would turn out to be "rather foolish", Mr Douglas Hurd, Minister of State at the Foreign Office, said yesterday.

The Olympic debate was only beginning, and nobody could be sure what American, German and French athletes would do.

Mr Hurd told Conservative students in Loughborough that there was "naive" talk of complicitors doing what they wanted and helping their consciences with demonstrations.

Last Jews in Alexandria await a visit by Israeli leadersFrom Christopher Walker
Alexandria, March 28

In faded French writing, the notice at the entrance of the Eliyahu Hannabi synagogue still gives a polite warning that a maximum of five minutes is permitted to photograph a wedding because of the need to make way for the family of the next couple in the queue.

"Unfortunately, it is quite irrelevant, as we no longer have any Jewish marriages or births in the city," explained Mr Clement Setton, president of Alexandria's fast-disappearing Jewish Community. "Once we were 40,000, but now there are only 140 of us left, and the

youngest of those is a woman of 60."

This morning, Mr Setton, a sprightly 75-year-old, was up early to make his way to the synagogue, an elegant and imposing building with seating capacity for nearly 1,000. Complete with its impressive pink marble pillars, it has remained completely unscathed during the 30 years that Egypt and Israel were at war.

His purpose was to complete preparations for the emotional visit of two leading Israeli politicians, Dr Joseph Burg, the Interior Minister, and Mr Yitzhak Shamir, the new Foreign Minister.

There is, sadly, no way that we can hope to revive our community as all the children have left", said Mr Setton, a retired shipping agent who was born in the city. "But the new peace between Egypt and Israel has given us all a great psychological boost".

The Jews of Alexandria still

reminisce nostalgically about their city's romantic past. Next to the synagogue, the largest in Egypt, stands the former school which still has its name written in large Hebrew script. The building, like many of the other Jewish properties, has now been leased to the Egyptians.

Altogether, Jewish possessions in Alexandria in 1967, the Alexandrian Jews still have one 90-year-old cantor who is able to lead prayers. Today, in one of the quintessential offshoots of the Middle East peace process, he performed his task in a flowing white robe, bent almost double over a stick.

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The Jews of Alexandria still

sources of arms and were not able to retreat into sanctuaries in Pakistan.

The point of the latest Cuban initiative, which would seem to have the tacit backing of Moscow, is not so much to neutralise Afghanistan but to persuade Pakistan and other Muslim countries to accept the status quo and cut off aid to the rebels.

But can the Russians tolerate even a low level of resistance? The Soviet leadership has always had an inordinate fear of any opposition. It does not feel secure until it has eliminated not just most resistance but all of it. The history of the subjugation of central Asia, which lasted for almost a decade after the revolution, shows that the Russians did not rest until they had stamped out all armed resistance.

They may believe the same goes for Afghanistan, in which case the military presence will have to last longer and the Russians will be in danger of alienating not only the fundamentalist Muslims but all Afghans in

Marijuana smokers are starting youngerFrom Our Own Correspondent
Washington, March 28

children has increased markedly in potency over past five years.

Turning to the health impacts, the report says that studies have confirmed indications that marijuana intoxication interferes "immediate memory and a range of intellectual tasks" and that might be expected to impair classroom learning.

The study, entitled *Marijuana and Health*—1980, says a national survey in 1977 showed a 25 per cent annual increase in the total of those aged between 12 and 17 who had ever used marijuana, and a 30 per cent rise in the number of that age group who were currently using the drug.

By contrast, regular use among those over 18 remained relatively static, the report says.

This trend has continued since then. For example, regular daily use of marijuana by children at secondary schools has increased from 5.8 per cent in 1975 to 10.3 per cent last year. Nearly a third of teenagers first smoke it before they are 15 and about 40 million Americans of all ages have experimented with marijuana.

The Health Department is also concerned that the marijuana commonly sold to school

Red Cross seeks truce as Chad rivals reinforce

Paris, March 28—The battle

for the Chad capital, of N'Djamena between opposing Muslim armies intensified today as the International Committee of the Red Cross sought a truce to enable the evacuation of civilians from the battered city, French officials said.

They said reinforcements since then have been applied to children at the front line, the use of marijuana at pregnancy should continue to strongly discourage report adds.

However marijuana does some, albeit limited, value in medicine, THC, the active ingredient of marijuana related drugs, have shown some promise in treating nausea and vomiting often accompany cancer ch therapy, the report says.

The Red Cross seeks truce as Chad rivals reinforce

France today sent two

truce transports with doctors mobile operating theatres.

Thousands of civilians already fled N'Djamena, between 20,000 and 30,000 crossed the river Chari ferry to seek shelter in Cameroon, or Kouroussi.

They said reinforcements in men and munitions had reached both sides, the People's Armed Forces of President Goukouni Oueddei and the Armed Forces of the North of Mr Hissene Habre, the Defence Minister.

The report said the refugees were destitute, lacking food and medical supplies. They were in desperate need outside help despite the efforts of local people to relieve

the French Army evacuated nearly 1,000

peasants and mortars and rocket launchers, causing heavy casualties, he added.

One official here said: "The situation in N'Djamena can only be described as dramatic."

Troops commanded by Colonel Abdelsader Wadal Kamougue, the southern leader, were bombarding the city indiscriminately.

Civil servant cleared

Bonn, March 28—An attempt by the West German Post Office Ministry to have a postal official disciplined and possibly dismissed for committing a serious offence in the Civil Service Disciplinary Court today.

One official here said: "The situation in N'Djamena can only be described as dramatic."

Troops commanded by Colonel Abdelsader Wadal Kamougue, the southern leader, were bombarding the city indiscriminately.

Annabel Schild

After 213 days, a 15-year-old schoolgirl was led blindfold from a murky mire cave and abandoned a lonely Sardinian road. Late Annabel Schild was. She tells her unique tale tomorrow only *The Sunday Times*.

Gaullists show rare unity in attacking BritainFrom Ian Murray
St Raphael, March 28

Gaullists parliamentarians meeting here showed a rare unity today when they damned Britain and America, and to a lesser extent the Soviet Union, for attacking reports on agricultural and foreign policy.

Whatever the internal problems of the movement, and they are many, its members speak with one voice when it comes to these two subjects and on agriculture they can well claim to speak for France.

M. Jean-Claude Pasty, the movement's agricultural spokesman, issued a report of which they talk a lot of the Iron Maiden (Mrs Thatcher). France must oppose the Iron Maiden with a will of steel as General de Gaulle knew how to do so well from 1940-1945 against Winston Churchill.

His thesis was that France must develop and expand its agriculture and resist all costs any attempt by the Community to alter the common agricultural policy.

The firmness with which the Eight will face the British demands at the Brussels summit will be a test of their political will to construct a truly independent Europe," he said to loud applause.

Rather than attack surpluses

there was a need to incite them in order to export France is not Great Britain is to say we have an agricultural production potential which far exceeds the possibilities of our internal market," said. "French agriculture does not want to be asphyxiated, it is therefore condemned to port."

America was attacked by Jean de Lipowski, a former junior foreign minister, for "abusing economic power" having already abused its neo-military power. It was also angry about the President's recent "unbalanced" initial in saying Palestinians should have self-determination ignoring the Israeli position.

M. Lipowski was most critical of all about President

card d'Estang's failure to cut against Soviet intervention in Afghanistan clearly from beginning. He was also angry about the President's recent "unbalanced" initial in saying Palestinians should have self-determination ignoring the Israeli position.

The united applause will greet both reports, mass the clash of personalities between Prime Minister of Gaulle and M. Jacques Chirac, the present Gaullist leader, which threatens to fragment movement.

RIG DISASTER

a King helicopters
both air forces
ayed key rescue role

In Chartres in the closely-knit circle of the rescue crews the Alexander Kielland affair is seen as having been the test of all the skills, men and organizations up over the past 36 years this once-despised type of started saving lives in the jungles toward the Second World War.

Royal Air Force and Norwegian Air Force who took part in Thursday's rescues and were searching for survivors or until late yesterday, all the few machines other than the British-built Westlandings could have coped the appalling conditions from the British coast and 150 miles from the Norwegian base.

It had to use all the communications equipment fitted aircraft, which cost £1.25m each, particularly automatic hovering facility enabled pilots to move to an average 40ft above rising and falling 30ft or in total darkness or in

were often totally dependent on radar to avoid collision with the many rigs in the sea. At one stage there was a serious risk of mid-air collision as the captain of one Sea King had a "near miss" with another. A civilian helicopter was trying to assist.

Reporters covering the disaster were: Ed Allen, Ian Bradley, Charles, David Felton, Es Gabb, Nicholas Hirst, Ed Faux, Ronald Kerr, Don MacIntyre, Ian Hug, Hugh Noyes, Stewart Nicholas Timmins.

Lieutenant Michael second pilot of "Rescue 1" RAF Sea King of 202 Squadron on the which scrambled from in Northumberland minutes after receiving the call, told me: "We the search areas at 8.30 half an hour later we dinghy with ten people

sea was so rough that we thought it would be to direct a surface rescue from one of the oil rigs after than try to winch survivors up ourselves we realized this would so long so we winched all up in about 45s."

winchman down the wire light Sergeant Michael. Having experienced is involved in winching the sea at night and being in calm exercise contributed what Flight Sergeant and the other winchman to cope with in Thursday's conditions. Clearly just have demanded the in physical endurance personal courage.

crew of Rescue 31, the were Flight Lieutenant Neville, aircraft captain pilot, and Flight Sergeant Moody, navigator in operator, dropped first batch of survivors on rig and then climbed it because fog was added the hazards of high seas height they picked up a keeping signal from an

Disaster without reason, page 12

London will
ever most
insurance

hard Allen substantial part of the insurance claim for rail damage will have to be by Lloyd's and the accommodation rig was in Norway for a total sum, about the value of a week, and much of the sum came to London as a reinsurance package by insurance brokers, such as Forbes, Bland.

disasters: April 16, The Ocean Express oil rig off the Gulf of Mexico.

13, 12, 1977: 15,000 to tons of oil gushed into the Sea during a safety change on the Bravo rig Ekofisk field. The 12 board were evacuated, Red Adair, the United firefighter, brought the under control. The rig was manned by Petroleum, the operating Alexander Kielland.

1979, six accidents place, mainly off the coast of the United States. The serious was the blow-out into Mexico on June 3. No lives were reported, but oil was spewed into a giant spill that lasted months.

North Sea has seen many since drilling for oil, but none on the scale of the disaster. Loss of oil has been mainly confined to single incidents involving

the month 28 staff from a drilling rig, the Argyll Field, Ocean, were evacuated as a blow-out.

Minister being informed

Prime Minister, who was quizzed yesterday for talks with Schmidt, the West German Chancellor, was being fully informed of developments.

She expressed her concern at the tragedy, as did the

Wrapped in a blanket, a rescued man tells his story.

By David Felton and Ian Bradley

The Alexander L. Kielland, which was built in France nearly four years ago, was checked by the Norwegian authorities for structural defects last September and was due for inspection in July.

September's inspection covered the basic structure, machinery, equipment and although some minor faults were found, these were rectified and were not related to structural problems.

The inspection was carried out by engineers from Det Norske Veritas, the Norwegian equivalent of the British Lloyd's Register of Shipping, which certifies vessels and rigs operating under the Norwegian flag for insurance purposes.

Mr Mathiesen said the completed rig was then surveyed to ensure that it complies with the design and with Norwegian Government safety regulations which are administered by the Maritime Directorate. Items covered by the final certification include materials, structural

columns to be brought ashore for inspection. It is too soon to say what went wrong, we have to wait until we have all the information.

Most of the rigs of similar design were built in Dunkirk by Compagnie Française d'Entreprises Métalliques.

Mr Mathiesen said that the certification process was "very comprehensive" and started at the design stage when the technical drawings, design and specifications had to be approved by his organization.

Checks were carried out throughout the construction of a rig, including tests on materials being used.

Mr Mathiesen said the completed rig was then surveyed to ensure that it complies with the design and with Norwegian Government safety regulations which are administered by the Maritime Directorate. Items covered by the final certification include materials, structural

stability, water-tight integrity, its steering gear, electrical equipment and protection against explosion.

Each year Det Norske Veritas carries out an inspection of vessels. It has certified and once every four years there is a more comprehensive check.

These are in addition to regular checks by the Maritime Directorate to make sure that safety regulations are being implemented.

British maritime engineers last night said there were four possible reasons for the Kielland tragedy. Materials could have fractured due to metal fatigue, there could have been a material failure because of overstressing; metal could have buckled under abnormal pressure from wind and waves and there may have been an unforeseen accident, which combined with high stresses, could have caused the metal in the column to rupture and buckle.

A Lloyd's spokesman said: "This is probably the worst offshore rig disaster. Around the world there are more than 450 semi-submersibles of all designs but we can't recall anything quite of this scale."

Toral Oil Marine have on charter the Pentagon 84 rig, which is semi-submersible and of similar design to the Alexander Kielland. It has been drilling off the Shetland Islands for about two months. It is owned by Fofex-Neptune.

Unlike the Alexander Kielland, which was built in France, Pentagon 84 was built in Finland. It also differs from the stricken rig in being used for drilling rather than for accommodation.

Total said yesterday that they have had no problems with their rig and do not feel it is necessary to halt operations.

The rig had been recently re-inspected by Lloyd's to their

full satisfaction.

Phillips Petroleum said yes-

terday that they were due to take on charter next month the Henrik Oil rig, which is of similar design to the Alexander Kielland and was built by the same company.

Phillips said that they were not aware of having any other rigs of the same design on charter. They said: "We haven't discovered the cause of the accident. It would be silly to assume at this stage that there is necessarily any design fault in the rig."

The British National Oil Corporation and Occidental Oil both have only two rigs on charter, in neither case the same design as the Alexander Kielland.

Texaco, Conoco and Mobil oil companies also confirmed

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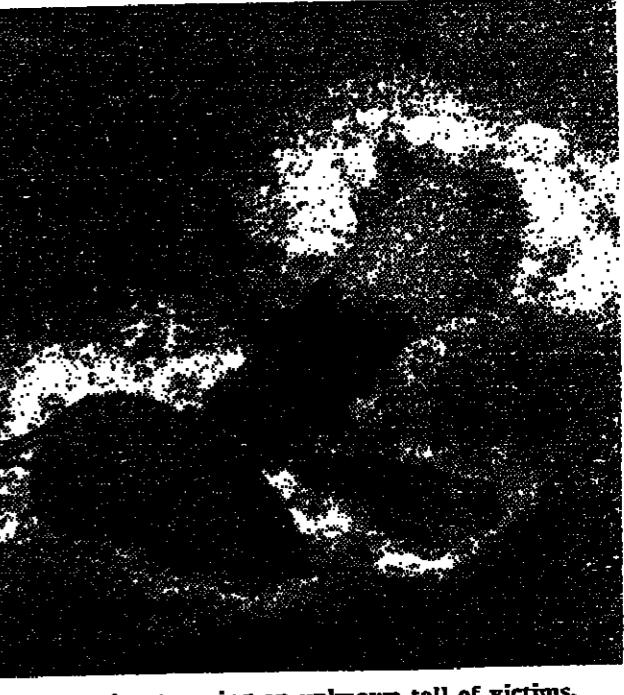
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Unions demand urgent look into gale risks

By Donald MacIntyre
Labour Reporter

National and local union officials yesterday called for an immediate inspection of all North Sea rigs which might carry the same risk of being capsized as the Alexander L. Kielland.

Both the Association of Scientific Technical and Managerial Staffs and the Transport and General Workers' Union endorsed a call by the Aberdeen-based Inter-Union Offshore Committee for detailed structural examinations of similar rigs to ensure that they could withstand gales.

The two unions were represented on the Burgoyne Committee whose official report on offshore safety was published earlier this month and issued a dissenting note urging that the enforcement of safety standards on British installations should not be left to the Department of Energy.

While professing anxiety not to be seen as exploiting the disaster, particularly before a full inquiry had uncovered the cause, union officials claimed that it underlined the TUC view that current enforcement of safety provisions in the North Sea are inadequate.

Union officials also pointed to a recommendation in the Burgoyne report, on which there was no dissent, urging the Department of Energy to issue guidance on standby vessels and in particular to consider alternative methods of evacuation to lifeboats and life rafts in emergencies, such as scrambling

net.

The committee also said that work should be done on minimizing heat loss of persons in the water.

The TUC in its submission urged survival drills to be made compulsory in onshore training and that evacuation and fire drills should be made fully effective.

Miss Sheila McKechnie, ASTMS health and safety officer, said last night: "When you are on the limits of technology as in the North Sea the conflicts between safety and production are extreme. There is no doubt that this high risk area in many cases production is put before safety."

Doubts raised about other five-legged submersibles

There are 11 French-designed structures will capsize very quickly. There is very little time to take corrective action.

He was against dramatic measures, like evacuating all 15 French-designed "pentagons".

British Petroleum said: "Everyone has to use semi-submersibles because they are the only ones capable of operating as exploration rigs in North Sea conditions."

The UK Offshore Operators' Association said: "The mere fact that a semi-submersible was involved doesn't tell us anything about that system in general."

Investigators are bound to examine the Kielland's anchor chain. The rig was chained to the seabed, but the chains were linked to the superstructure by a short section of heavy wire.

The oil industry is reported to have had doubts recently about using wire in the anchorage systems of semi-submersibles.

Thursday's disaster comes three weeks after a British report on offshore rig safety.

Mr Brian Conk, editor of Offshore Services Magazine, said: "I don't believe what happened yesterday affects rigs and platforms of other designs in the North Sea."

Dutch join search

The Hague, March 28.—The Dutch Navy sent one of its warships to help search for survivors. The Oosterse, specialized in anti-submarine warfare, was on an exercise in the North Sea.

Life jackets and pillows found floating in sea

From Our Correspondent

Berwick

An air-sea rescue helicopter from RAF Boulmer was the first on the scene and crew member Flt Sgt John Moody described the scene as "absolute chaos".

They picked up 10 men in a life raft and landed them on a nearby rig then pinpointed a lifeboat with 26 on board. These were rescued by ship.

Sgt Moody said the rescued

men told them the rig took only eight seconds to list to an angle of 50 degrees then seven minutes before it turned over.

When we arrived there were life jackets and pillows and all sorts of things floating in the sea. The weather was atrocious with poor visibility; biting cold; heavy seas and a wind of 30 knots.

It made coordination of the search extremely difficult. We did another search today but found nothing."

Saturday Review

The porridge party

by Graham Greene

The disagreeable manservant, whom I had hoped never to see again, opened the door. There were five expensive cars lounging in the drive, two of them with chauffeurs, and I thought that he looked at my little Fiat 500 with disdain. Then he looked at my suit and I could see that his eyebrows went up. "What name?" he asked, though I felt sure that he remembered it well enough. He spoke in English with a bit of a cockney twang. So he had remained English by nationality.

"Jones," I said.

"Doctor Fischer's engaged."

"He's expecting me?" I said.

"Doctor Fischer's dining with friends."

"I happen to be dining with him myself."

"Have you an invitation?"

"Of course I have an invitation."

"Let me see the card."

"You can't. I left it at home."

He scowled at me, but he was not confident—I could tell that I said. "I don't think Doctor Fischer would be very pleased if there's an empty place at his table. You'd better go and ask him."

"What did you say your name was?"

"Jones."

I followed him, his white coat through the hall and up the stairs. On the landing he turned to me. He said, "If you've been lying to me... If you weren't invited..." He made a motion with his fists like a boxer sparing.

"What's your name?" I asked.

"What's that to do with you?"

"I just want to tell the Doctor how you welcome his friends."

"Friends," he said. "He has no friends. I tell you, if you weren't invited..."

"I am invited."

We turned the opposite way from the study where I had last seen Doctor Fischer and he flung open a door. "Mr Jones," the man grunted and I walked in, and there stood all the Toads looking at me. The men wore dinner jackets and Mrs Montgomery a long dress.

"Come in, Jones," Doctor Fischer said. "You can serve dinner as soon as it's ready, Albert."

The table was laid with crystal glasses which caught the lights of a chandelier overhead; even the soup plates looked expensive. I wondered a little at seeing them there: it was hardly the season for cold soup. "That is Jones, my son-in-law," Doctor Fischer said. "You must excuse his manners, a deformity. Mrs Montgomery, Mr Kips, Monsieur Belmont, Mr Richard Deane, Divisionnaire Krueger."

"Not for me to criticize Krueger. I could feel the fumes of their hostility projected at me like tear-gas. Why? Perhaps it was my dark suit. I had lowered what apartment buildings would call the "standing".

"I have met Monsieur Jones," Belmont said as though he were a prosecution witness identifying the accused.

"Me too," said Mrs Montgomery, "briefly."

"Jones is a great linguist," Doctor Fischer said. "He translates letters about chocolates, and I realised he must have made enquiries about me from my employers. Here, Jones, at our little parties we use English as our common language because Richard Deane, great star though he may be, speaks no other, though he sometimes attempts a kind of French in his cuts—after his third one. On the screen you've only heard him dubbed in French."

Everyone laughed as though out of cue except Deane who gave a mirthless smile. "He has the qualities after a drink or two to play Falstaff except a lack of humour and a lack of weight. The second tonight we shall do our best to remedy. The humour, I'm afraid, is beyond us. You may ask what is left. Only his fast-diminishing reputation among women and teenagers. Kips, you are not enjoying yourself is something wrong? Perhaps you miss our usual *aperitifs*, but tonight I didn't want to spoil your palates for what's coming."

"No, no, I assure you nothing is wrong, Doctor Fischer. Nothing."

"I always insist," Doctor Fischer said. "At my little parties that everybody enjoys himself."

"They are a riot," Mrs Montgomery said, "a riot."

"Doctor Fischer is invari-



Illustration by Sally

blly a very good host," Divisionnaire Krueger informed me with condescension.

"And so generous," Mrs Montgomery said. "This necklace I'm wearing—it was a prize at our last party. She was wearing a heavy necklace of gold pieces—they seemed to me from a distance to be Krueger-rands."

"There is always a little prize for everyone," the Divisionnaire murmured. He was certainly old and grey and he was probably full of sleep. I liked him to the best because he seemed to have accepted me more easily than the others.

"There the prizes are," Mrs Montgomery said. "I helped him choose." She went over to a side-table where I noticed now a pile of gift-wrapped parcels. She touched one with the tip of a finger like a child resting a Christmas stocking to tell from the crackle what is within.

"Prizes for what?" I asked.

"Certainly not for intelligence," Dr Fischer said, "or the Divisionnaire would never buy anything."

Everyone was watching the pile of gifts.

"All we have to do is just to put up with his little whims," Mrs Montgomery explained, "and then he distributes the prizes. There was one evening—can you believe it?—he served up live lobsters with bowls of boiling water. We had to catch and cook our own. One lobster nipped the General's finger."

"I bear the scar still," Divisionnaire Krueger complained.

"The only wound in action which he has ever received," Doctor Fischer said.

"It was a riot," Mrs Montgomery told me as though I might not have caught the point.

"Anyway it turned her hair blue," Doctor Fischer said.

"Before that night it was an unsavoury grey stained with nicotine."

"Not grey—a natural blonde—and not nicotine-stained."

"Remember the rules, Mrs Montgomery," Doctor Fischer said. "If you contradict me once again you will lose your prize."

"That happened once at one of our parties to Mr Kips," Monsieur Belmont said. "He lost an eighteen-carat gold lighter. Like this one." He took a leather case from his pocket.

"It was little loss to me," Mr Kips said. "I don't smoke."

"Be careful, Kips. Don't denigrate my gifts—or yours might disappear a second time tonight."

I thought: But surely this is a madhouse ruled by a mad doctor. It was only curiosity which kept me there—certainly it was not for any prize that I stayed.

"Perhaps," Doctor Fischer said, "before we sit down to dinner—a dinner I very much hope that you'll enjoy and do full justice to, as I have given a great deal of thought to the menu—I should explain to our new guest the etiquette we observe at these dinners."

"Most necessary," Belmont said. "I think—if you will excuse me—you should perhaps have put his appearance here—shall we say—to the vote? After all, we are a kind of club."

Mr Kips said, "I agree with Belmont. We all of us know where we stand. We accept certain conditions. It's all in the spirit of fun. A stranger might misunderstand."

"Mr Kips is in search of a doctor," Doctor Fischer said.

"You are afraid that the value of the prizes may be reduced with another guest just as you hoped the value would rise after the death of two of our number."

There was a silence. I thought from the expression in his eyes that Mr Kips was about to make an angry reply, but he didn't: all he said was, "You misunderstand me."

Now all of this, read by someone not present at the party, might not sound so more than the jolly banter of clubmen who insult each other in a hearty way before sitting down to a good dinner and some heavy drinking and good company. But to me, as I watched the faces and detected how near the knuckle the teasing seemed to go, there was a hollowness and a hypocrisies in the humorous exchanges and like a raincloud hung over the room—carried on his guests on the part of the host and harred of the host on the part of the guests. I felt a complete outsider for though I disliked every one of them, my emotion was too weak as yet to be called hatred.

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"What about Mr Jones?"

"He is here as an observer rather than as a guest, but of course, as he is my son-in-law, he may imagine he has great

expectations. Expectations are a form of wealth, I am sure Mr Kips could arrange him substantial credits, and expectations are not taxable—he wouldn't need to consult Monsieur Belmont. Albert, the waiter."

For the first time I noticed that there were no napkins by our places. Albert was fanning a bib round Mrs Montgomery's neck. She gave a squeal of pleasure. "Ecrevisses!" I love ecrevisses."

"We haven't roasted the late lamented Monsieur Grosel," the Divisionnaire said, adjusting his bib. "I won't pretend that I ever liked that man."

"Hurry up then, while Albert fetches your dinner. To Monsieur Grosel. He only attended two of our dinners before dying of cancer, so I had no time to study his character. If I had known of the cancer I would never have invited him to join us. I expect my guess to entertain me for a much longer time. Ah, he is now my dinner, so I can now begin my own."

Mr Montgomery gave a high shriek. "Why, this is porridge, cold porridge."

"Real Scotch porridge. You should appreciate it, with your presents," Doctor Fischer gave himself a helping of caviare and poured himself out a glass of vodka.

"It will destroy all our appetite," Deane said.

"Don't be afraid of that. There is nothing to follow."

"This is going too far, Doctor Fischer," Mrs Montgomery said. "Cold porridge. Why, it's totally inedible."

"Don't eat it then. Don't eat it, Mrs Montgomery. By the rules you will only lose your present. To tell you the truth I ordered porridge especially for Jones. I had thought of some partridges, but how could he have managed with hand?"

To my astonishment I saw that the Divisionnaire and Richard Deane had begun to eat and Mr Kips had at least picked up his spoon.

"If we could have a little sugar," Belmont said, "it might perhaps help."

"I understand that the Welsh—no, no, I remember Jones. I mean the Scots—consider it a blasphemy to spoil their porridge with sugar. They even eat it, I am told, with salt. You may certainly have salt. Offer the gentlemen salt, Albert. Mrs Montgomery has decided to go hungry."

"Oh no, I won't ruin your little joke, Doctor Fischer."

mont. No presents before everyone has finished." I was reminded of a huntsman with a crack of the whip.

"I like to think she greed is a little more God's."

"Is God greedy?"

"Oh, don't think a moment I believe in his more than I believe in devil, but I have always thought theology an amusing subject."

"I don't suppose Yvonne goes well with porridge."

"Have a good laugh at them, Jones. They won't take it seriously. You can take her. What was I saying?"

"Trinkets are, ha enough."

"I like to think she greed is a little more God's."

"Is God greedy?"

"Oh, don't think a moment I believe in his more than I believe in devil, but I have always thought theology an amusing subject."

"I don't suppose they enjoy it," Doctor Fischer said.

"I don't find them funny."

"Of course I agree that a party like this has a serious side, but all the same... Aren't you reminded a little of greed eating out of troughs? You don't attempt yours, Jones?"

Doctor Fischer asked me and he helped himself to a little more caviare.

"I don't find them funny."

"Nor rich enough," Doctor Fischer said. "For several years now I have been studying the greediness of the rich. To him that hath shall be given"—those cynical words of Christ they take very literally. "Given not 'earned', you notice. The presents I have given out when the dinner is over they could easily afford to give themselves, but then they would have earned them if only by signing a cheque. The rich hate signing cheques. Hence the success of credit cards. One card takes the place of a hundred cheques. They'll do anything to get their presents for nothing. This is one of the hardest parts. I've submitted to yet to yet and look how quickly they are eating up their cold porridge, so that the time for the presents will arrive. You, I am afraid, will get nothing if you don't eat."

"I have something of more value than your present waiting for me at home."

"Very gallantly," Doctor Fischer said. "But don't count on your expectations from me."

"I don't."

"I have a poor man's pride, I see. After all, why shouldn't I tell you. You are a sort of son. I want to discover, Jones, if the greed of our rich friends has any limit. If there's a 'thus far and no further'."

"Deane can eat him a furious look, but he accepted the second helping."

"I understand that the Divisionnaire and Richard Deane had begun to eat and Mr Kips had at least picked up his spoon.

"I'm joking, of course. Deane could no more play Falstaff than Britt Eklund could play Cleopatra. Deane is not an actor: he is a sex object. Teenage girls worship him, Jones. How disappointed they would be if they could see him without his clothes. I have reason to believe that he suffers from premature ejaculation. Perhaps the porridge will slow you down, Deane, my poor fellow. Albert, another plate for Mr Kips. Give him a clean one, Albert. I think that tonight will mark the end of one experiment. I am playing with another idea."

"You are a rich man yourself. Are there limits to your greed?"

"Perhaps I shall find out one day. But my greed is of a different kind to theirs. I'm not greedy for trinkets, Jones."

This extract is taken from Dr Fischer of Geneva or Bomb Party by Graham Greene, which has just been published by The Bodley Head £4.50.

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Charming curiosities of the vocal art

Frederica von Stade: Arias by Monteverdi, Broschi, Leoncavallo, National Centre Orchestra/Bernard Stade. SLS 76800, £4.99.

Other: Songs. Stade/LPO, drawn Davis. CBS 76823, 39.

Opera: Arias. Suthern/National PO/Bonynges. SXL 6930, 39.

Beck, etc: Sacred Music. Vienna Boys' Choir. ARL 30463, 39.

Gomez French Songs. Saga 8, £2.75. Spanish Songs. SAG 5409, £2.75.

If: Songs. Bailey/Constable. A 5468, £2.75.

Teyle: A Tribute. RBC GL 565, £4.75; ZCF 369, 39.

in Glyndebourne revived neverland's *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria*. The Penelope was Frederica von Stade, a moment of noble grief in her voice as well as her match of word and tone. A moment of that impersonation arrives in her Italian tragic recital, recorded two years earlier in Ottawa, aching and exquisitely cultivated performance of her scene, complete with the for her interlocutor, the Erices, nicely sung by Alice Taylor.

The recital also includes what was once Rossini's most popular composition, the aria "tanti palpiti" from *Credito*, and the best-known *canzoni* solo in *Semiramide*, "Raggio". Miss Stade's sad passages here are memorable, the vocal timbre attractive—but should she be singing Arsace, the *eroe*, rather than *Semiramide*?

I track that I have played several times for sheer pleasure in Musetta's solo "E'en", from the other *time*, by Leoncavallo, enlivening music interpreted with rousing feeling. With spirited under our old Sadler's is conductor, Mario Bernini, and an agreeable recording, this recital can be highly recommended.

Here in London, while this paper was sadly in abeyance, Miss Stade sang Mahler's *of a Wayfaring Lad*, I might not quite idiomatically recorded the cycle at about time, in a much more pathetic performance,

William Mann

Orpheus exuberantly emerges from the undergrowth

Offenbach: *Orpheus in the Underworld*. Mesplé/Rhodes/Sénéchal. Toulouse Orchestra/Plasson. HMV SLS 5175 (3 records), £13.95.

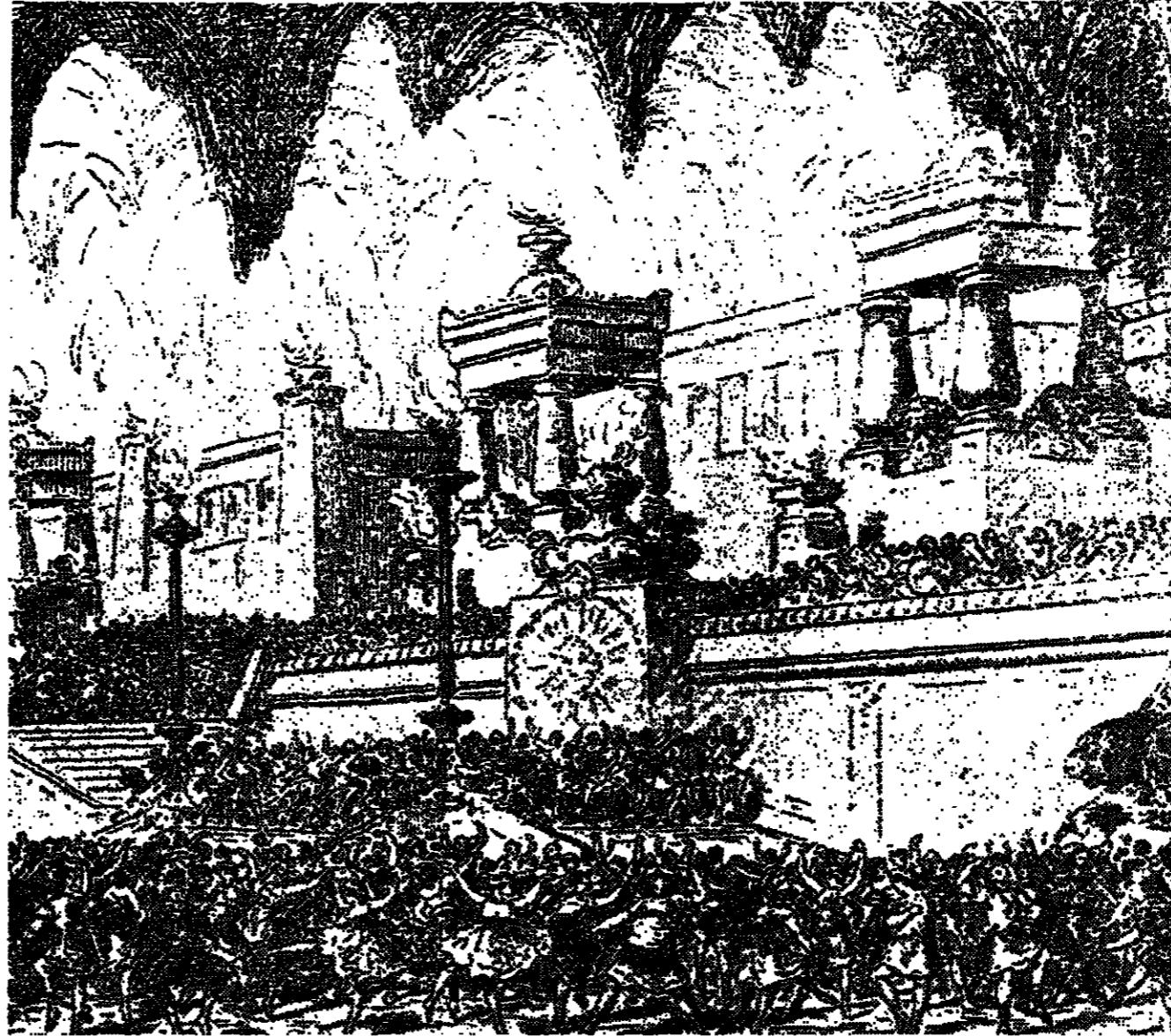
Massenet: *Trovano*. Kraus/Mangruera. LPO/Plasson. HMV SLS 5183 (3 records), £13.95.

Mascagni: *Cavalleria Rusticana*. Scotti/Domingo/Elvira/NPO/Levine. RCA RL 13091, £5.49.

Which is more curious, Dame Joan Sutherland singing Wagner, or Plácido Domingo proclaiming Luther's "Ein feste Burg" in English, with the Vienna Boys' Choir to back him? Dame Joan was a lovely Eva in *Die Meistersinger* at Covent Garden in the 1950s. Since then she has concentrated on other music; but today, with her voice become heavier, she evidently has her sights once again set on the Wizard of Bayreuth. Perhaps she was thinking of the great Lilli Lehmann who, in days gone by, included in her repertoire Mozart's *Donna Anna*, Bellini's *Norma* and Wagner's *Sieglinde*. Sutherland's legato technique is welcome in the music of Elsa and Elisabeth, but as she expands into Evchen or Isolde so the quality of tone spreads, and the musical style. "Liebestod" is big but dull and not far short of wobbly. The recital by Domingo and the *Wiener Sängerknaben* is something of a brain-tub. That charming scene in Kienz's *Evanescimento*, where the itinerant preacher teaches the Sermon on the Mount to a crowd of children, returns to the catalogue, and deserves a welcome. Faure's "Crucifixus" is an attractive rarity. The celebrated tenor is in sterling voice, likewise the boys; the musical arrangements, and the sound on record, lay on the icing sugar all too generously. In record of sacred music, why not Handel's "Ombra Mai Fu" included?

Saga, whose catalogue includes several desirable vocal records, have now begun to press them in Germany. The surfaces are brilliantly silent, the recorded acoustic remains cramped, as if under a low ceiling, in Jill Gomez's recitals of French and Spanish song, and Norman Bailey's nicely selective *Wolf* anthology, now even more worth hearing than before; I list the BBC's Maggie Teyte record for enthusiasts: it includes some famous items, and much not hitherto available. What a personality, whether in speech or song!

William Mann



Stage design by Jules Chéret for the revival of *Orphée aux enfers* at the Gaîté-Lyrique in 1874

are pretty well filled. The driving force behind this performance is clearly Michel Plasson and his favoured forces from Toulouse, to whom Plasson is now wisely entrusting most of their French operetta. Plasson conducts with a fizz, gusto and wit which are at one with the mocking energy Offenbach displayed at the height of his powers. Nothing is sacred, least of all Gluck's *Orfeo*—a power worth noting by those who were "appalled" by the *Fidelio* quote in the Covent Garden *Fledermaus*—and the

derisive high spirits have the flavour of an old-fashioned night with the *Crazy Gang* at the Victoria Palace.

A little more of Plasson's youthful brio could have been injected into the cast, who in one or two cases are decidedly long in the musical tooth. In some instances it does not matter: Michel Sénéchal plays *Orphée* as a middle-aged, down-at-heels music teacher, which is very close to the intention of Offenbach and his librettist, and the veteran mezzo Jane Rhodes is a poised

and incisive *Public Opinion*. On the other hand Madly Mesplé and Jacks voice as Eurydice at the *Victoria Palace*.

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Another little more of Plasson's youthful brio could have been injected into the cast, who in one or two cases are decidedly long in the musical tooth. In some instances it does not matter: Michel Sénéchal plays *Orphée* as a middle-aged, down-at-heels music teacher, which is very close to the intention of Offenbach and his librettist, and the veteran mezzo Jane Rhodes is a

PERSONAL CHOICE



Broadcasting Guide

Edited by Peter Davalle

TELEVISION

BBC 1

9.05 am *Bagpuss*: Story for children. 9.15 *India, Zindagi Naya Jeevan*: News, music and stories for Asian viewers. 9.30 *Prescription for Complaints*: Comedy training film about customers' grumbles. With John Cleese, Penelope Keith, etc. 9.45 *The Skill of Lip Reading*: Visit to a do-it-yourself shop (r). 10.00 *Accident of Birth*: New series about mental handicap. 1. The handicap is explained. 10.30 *Figures*: Everyday figures. 11.00 *Young at Heart*: 11.00 Russian Language and People. Repeat showing of lesson 11; 11.25 *Aventura*: Final lesson in this Italian course; 11.50 *The 607085 Show*: Roy Hudd and Irene Thomas have advice for the retired, or the advice for a Garden of Eden (see Personal Choice). 12.15 pm *Worship for Holy Week*: From St Mary's College, Blairs, Aberdeen. 1.00 *Farming*: the weekly magazine; 1.25 *Beside the Sea*: Tony Soper's special on sea and seashells. 1.30 *Newspaper Headlines*. 1.35 *Film*: Easter Parade (1948)

9.35 *Gymnast*: High Bar (r). 10.20 *Zorro*: Walt Disney serial. 10.45 *Marionette*: and 2 westerns: *Dicker, Curious*, and 2 westerns: *A horse called Comanche*, 11.05 *Film*: *Who Done It?* (1955) Benny Hill as a silly private eye entangled with foreign spies. With Belinda Lee, David Kossoff. 12.00 *Weather*.

9.05 am *Bagpuss*: Story for children. 9.15 *India, Zindagi Naya Jeevan*: News, music and stories for Asian viewers. 9.30 *Prescription for Complaints*: Comedy training film about customers' grumbles. With John Cleese, Penelope Keith, etc. 9.45 *The Skill of Lip Reading*: Visit to a do-it-yourself shop (r). 10.00 *Accident of Birth*: New series about mental handicap. 1. The handicap is explained. 10.30 *Figures*: Everyday figures. 11.00 *Young at Heart*: 11.00 Russian Language and People. Repeat showing of lesson 11; 11.25 *Aventura*: Final lesson in this Italian course; 11.50 *The 607085 Show*: Roy Hudd and Irene Thomas have advice for the retired, or the advice for a Garden of Eden (see Personal Choice). 12.15 pm *Worship for Holy Week*: From St Mary's College, Blairs, Aberdeen. 1.00 *Farming*: the weekly magazine; 1.25 *Beside the Sea*: Tony Soper's special on sea and seashells. 1.30 *Newspaper Headlines*. 1.35 *Film*: Easter Parade (1948)

9.35 *Dallas*: More about Sue Ellen's divorce action, and how J.R. plans his counter-attack. 9.45 *News*: with Peter Woods. 9.55 *Match of the Day*: Highlights of the First Division football matches, and a playback of the Grand National. 10.45 Saturday Night at the Mill: Presented by Bob Langley and Arianna Stasiopoulos. Guests include Ned Sherrin. 11.35 *Phil Silvers* as Sergeant Biko: Another of the excellent American TV comedies. 12.00 *Weather*.

Regions

BBC 1 VARIATIONS: Scotland: 4.30 *Sport*: 4.45 *Scoreboard*: 5.00 *Sport*: 5.30 *News*: 5.40 *Sport*: 6.00 *International Athletics*: Mar-

9.05 am *Open University*: Begins with *Revolution of 1848*, and ends with *Cultural Aspects of War*. 11.35 pm *Closedown* with *2.30*.

2.35 *Matt the Geyser*: Cartoon from Hungary. Music by Liszt. 3.45 *Chopsticks*: A Day in the Country. With Justin Case and Peter Wear. Their guest is Matyus More. 4.10 *Film*: Ten Thousand Bed-rooms (1957). Romantic comedy

with Dean Martin as a millionaire who goes hotel-hunting in Rome, with Eva Bartok and Anna Maria Alberghetti as sisters. 4.30 *Horizon*: *Magnet*. Earth. Repeat of last Monday's film about the effects of the earth's magnetic field. 5.50 *Trail and Salt*: Judy Lines and Bob Bond at Buckler's Hard, Hampshire. Look at trailer-sellers in the market, suitable for the family market. 6.00 *Weather*.

7.30 *Lucrezia Borgia*: Live relay with the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, of Donizetti's opera, with Joan Sutherland and Alfredo Kraus. Also on Radio 3. 8.00 pm *Scoreboard*: 8.15 *News*: 8.30 *Scoreboard*: 8.45 *News*: 8.55 *Scoreboard*: 9.00 *News*: 9.15 *Scoreboard*: 9.30 *News*: 9.45 *Scoreboard*: 10.00 *News*: 10.15 *Scoreboard*: 10.30 *News*: 10.45 *Scoreboard*: 11.00 *News*: 11.15 *Scoreboard*: 11.30 *News*: 11.45 *Scoreboard*: 12.00 *News*: 12.15 *Scoreboard*: 12.30 *News*: 12.45 *Scoreboard*: 13.00 *News*: 13.15 *Scoreboard*: 13.30 *News*: 13.45 *Scoreboard*: 14.00 *News*: 14.15 *Scoreboard*: 14.30 *News*: 14.45 *Scoreboard*: 15.00 *News*: 15.15 *Scoreboard*: 15.30 *News*: 15.45 *Scoreboard*: 16.00 *News*: 16.15 *Scoreboard*: 16.30 *News*: 16.45 *Scoreboard*: 17.00 *News*: 17.15 *Scoreboard*: 17.30 *News*: 17.45 *Scoreboard*: 18.00 *News*: 18.15 *Scoreboard*: 18.30 *News*: 18.45 *Scoreboard*: 19.00 *News*: 19.15 *Scoreboard*: 19.30 *News*: 19.45 *Scoreboard*: 20.00 *News*: 20.15 *Scoreboard*: 20.30 *News*: 20.45 *Scoreboard*: 21.00 *News*: 21.15 *Scoreboard*: 21.30 *News*: 21.45 *Scoreboard*: 22.00 *News*: 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Travel I

Where the Raj spirit lives on

NO SMOKING IN BED
ASHES WE FIND IN THE
DARNING MAY BE YOURS
A warning, at once headstrong
and pessimistic, on the
second floor of the Galle Face
tel in Colombo, is out of
spite with the general feel
of the establishment. In many
of Sri Lanka it seems as
though the British Raj left
ago, but at the Galle Face
sparks lives on.

There is nothing as vulgar as
bar in the foyer and drinks
served either in the public
area or on the terrace over-
king a lawn the colour of a
well tended cricket pitch in
May. In the entrance a
memoriam to the found-
ers of the hotel at the head of
series of other world events,
including the outbreak of the
Second World War and the birth
of Conrad Hilton. It is the
the Face, rather than the
five minutes walk down
road, that protects the
rancour to Colombo.

In arrival at the airport
to Sri Lanka will
be whisked straight off
the beach hotels, which
lead to the north and south
the capital, or they will
and a night or two in
tomb-like taking to the

The alternatives to the
the Face are the Oberoi, airy
well equipped with res-
rants, well designed along
lines of a top security jail
and a central well, or the
Continental, all glitter
and bustle, for those deter-
to spend their holidays
for bargaining Colombo
not a place to linger. Shop-
s will find silk curtains from
India, all around
wear-around bikini sets at
50 and gems starting from
one stone at 30 to 40p. But it
is not tiring work.

At poole, full moon, there
celebration and twice a
elephants pass in proces-
through the main streets,
the price paid for this is a
candy enveloped ban on the

of alcohol for 26 hours. No
exception is given for
guide books that hotels
warn you to stock up in
is an optimistic one.
the people of Sri Lanka
are making the country

one of Asia's fastest growing
areas lie beyond

Colombo. The prime attractions are climate and cost. The weather gods have arranged admirably so that, in principle, when the west coast is dry (December-May) the east is wet, and when the monsoon comes to the west the sun shines uninterruptedly around Trincomalee. This is clearly reflected in the packages of most of the tour operators, who change accommodation according to season. It so happens this year that both sides of the island have been rainless, but no one is complaining.

Prices outside the capital are considerably lower than within. A suite at the Galle Face costs £50 a night, full board at a beach hotel is unlikely to come to more than £10 a head. Standards are different, to be sure, but the cost of living is low enough to allow the package tour operator to become the new Raj. It is not easy to pay more than £50 for a table d'hôte meal; drinks, with the exception of prohibitively priced wine, are cheap; reckoned on 35p for a largish local gin and tonic and a few pence more for imported spirits.

Practically all the beach hotels look to the tour operators to provide their customers and in season the number of independent travellers will be down to 5 per cent or less. To the south of Colombo, Bentota and Beruwela are two of the most attractive resorts and the Bentota Beach and the Neptune are among the best hotels. I particularly liked the Neptune (which is included by one or two package companies) with its well appointed restaurant and food well above the general level. Avid Hikkaduwa, where the "ethnic" establishments still cater for elderly flower children.

To the north the Ranwell Beach sits on its own island, at one time a coconut plantation, approached by a floating bridge. You will share your bungalow with geckos, which chatter to one another the moment the sun sets, but the hotel is excellently run and draws heavily on the catch of the spectacular armada of fishing vessels which pass by every morning. A week on the beach is sufficient for most tourists and about four days too long as far as I am concerned. Most tour

operators offer a second week in the interior. The alternative is to hire a car. Costs start at about £30 a mile, which covers petrol. It can also include a driver at no extra charge other than his overnight allowance, which is about 75p, and there is every reason to take advantage of this arrangement.

Sri Lankan roads are not made for carefree driving; along the coast they are full and much used for the transaction of business or just idle chatter, while in the hills they are precipitous and serpentine. There is no point in watching for the next bullock cart when the scenery happens to be dazzling, as it is around Nuwara Eliya; nor is there any point in missing the chance of a post-lunch nap when the temperature has climbed to the high 80s.

From Kandy, the capital of Ceylon until 1900 centuries ago, the main tourist mecca is formed by the ancient cities in the northern plains: Anuradhapura, Sigiriya, Polonnaruwa and Minnukal among them. Don't try to fit in too much; there is no point in attempting to climb as far as Sigiriya rock face, even as far as the gallery of frescoes, in the midday sun unless you happen to be fully fit. As I rested on the way, a Sinhalese shouted out: "Twice I have been to the top; once when I was thirty, once when I was forty, but today I am not sure, Cheero!"

The lazy, however, can circuit the tanks—the enormous reservoirs constructed 2,000 years ago to irrigate this arid land—gaze on the sacred Bo Tree of similar age in Anuradhapura, admire the layout of Polonnaruwa and the surviving statues, or simply sip a Lankan Special at one of the government rest houses—gin, arrack distilled from coconut juice, fresh lime and ginger ale.

The rest houses are a relic of the Dutch colonists, who built them all over the island. They are variable in quality but all extremely cheap. Anuradhapura has two: one inside the holy city which serves no alcohol and the other outside where the Lankan Specials can be found. Possibly, though, the best way to reach the temple of Winacuram is £5.50 and sailed for a red from Lake Obudu in southern Yugoslavia.

currency, including refreshments.

Far East Economic Review's All Asia Guide is also useful. Things to take: an ample supply of suntan lotion, which is expensive. A complete armoury against mosquitoes is also recommended, particularly for those travelling to the east coast. Most hotels provide mosquito nets, but these are ineffective if the creatures are inside before spreading the net over the bed. Wine drinkers should make sure they take their full allowance when leaving Heathrow. If you are going to drive, an international licence is obligatory.

Package tours to Sri Lanka start at around £300 per person per week, room only. British Airways Apex fare is £433 return; all three of their package companies—Enterprise, Speed Bird and Sovereign, offer tours of Sri Lanka, starting at £375 a week.

Further information from the Ceylon Tourist Board, 52 High Holborn, London WC1.

to

there

British Airways fly direct from

to Colombo on Sun-

and Fridays (Boeing 747).

Lanka (Boeing 707) also fly

a week on the same days,

1 Gatwick via Frankfurt and

roughly two hours longer.

cheapest route, used by a

air number of tour opera-

ers by Aeroflot via Moscow.

is fairly exhausting. It is

able to check on the

before booking a tour.

ort charge: a passenger

ing charge of 100 rupees

head is required at

rupee, payable only in Sri

an currency. So hold back

appropriate amount of

ay, but no more because

import and export of

money is prohibited and

tends to be a long queu

re-exchange office. All

lases within the duty-free

have to be paid for in hard

currency, including refreshments.

Tips: even small services are expected to bring some reward, so keep all small change, particularly coins, which are useful to satisfy the children who surround your car in country areas and at tourist sights. Practically all hotels exchange money at rates which compare favourably with the Colombo banks. The acceptance of credit cards, on the other hand, is erratic outside the capital.

Books: a number of guide books are in preparation at the moment. By far the most useful one available is Sri Lanka—A Travel Survival Kit by Tony Wheeler, published by Lonely Planet at £2.50.

Although this came out only last month it is advisable to add 30 per cent on to most of the prices quoted. Mr Wheeler is very thorough and although he is writing basically for the shoe-string traveller, he is diligent about covering the up-market establishments. The

week on the beach is sufficient for most tourists and about four days too long as far as I am concerned. Most tour

operators offer a second week in the interior. The alternative is to hire a car. Costs start at about £30 a mile, which covers petrol.

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From Kandy, the capital of Ceylon until 1900

centuries ago, the main tourist mecca is formed by the ancient cities in the northern plains: Anuradhapura, Sigiriya, Polonnaruwa and Minnukal among them. Don't try to fit in too much; there is no point in attempting to climb as far as Sigiriya rock face, even as far as the gallery of frescoes, in the midday sun unless you happen to be fully fit. As I rested on the way, a Sinhalese shouted out: "Twice I have been to the top; once when I was thirty, once when I was forty, but today I am not sure, Cheero!"

The lazy, however, can circuit the tanks—the enormous reservoirs constructed 2,000 years ago to irrigate this arid land—gaze on the sacred Bo Tree of similar age in Anuradhapura, admire the layout of Polonnaruwa and the surviving statues, or simply sip a Lankan Special at one of the government rest houses—gin, arrack distilled from coconut juice, fresh lime and ginger ale.

The rest houses are a relic of the Dutch colonists, who built them all over the island. They are variable in quality but all extremely cheap. Anuradhapura has two: one inside the holy city which serves no alcohol and the other outside where the Lankan Specials can be found. Possibly, though, the best way to reach the temple of Winacuram is £5.50 and sailed for a red from Lake Obudu in southern Yugoslavia.

British Airways' Sovereign and Speed Bird tour) and make daily excursions. I also liked the look of the Royal Lotus, nor far from Palonnaruwa, where again the rest house is well situated on the lake.

Kandy, too, is built around an artificial lake. The two rival hotels, the Queen's and the Swiss, prominently featured in those prewar guide books, humble enough to have advertisement sections at the back, still stare at each other across the water. Of the two, the Swiss is the quieter and more relaxed, with huge public rooms where the fans revolve leisurely. It costs an exorbitant 60p a head to get from one hotel to another, whether by boat or by cab; on foot it takes no more than 10 minutes.

It is indeed a town where prices have to be watched, not least at the daily elephants' bath where the mahouts' hands can be as extended as the trunks of their charges. In compensation, Kandy is an elegant town, with fine botanical gardens including a spectacular orchid house. Look by and well worth a visit is the Nuwara Eliya: not is there any point in missing the chance of a post-lunch nap when the temperature has climbed to the high 80s.

At Kandy, the capital of Ceylon until 1900 centuries ago, the main tourist mecca is formed by the ancient cities in the northern plains: Anuradhapura, Sigiriya, Polonnaruwa and Minnukal among them. Don't try to fit in too much; there is no point in attempting to climb as far as Sigiriya rock face, even as far as the gallery of frescoes, in the midday sun unless you happen to be fully fit. As I rested on the way, a Sinhalese shouted out: "Twice I have been to the top; once when I was thirty, once when I was forty, but today I am not sure, Cheero!"

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Before the Italian Blue team

had settled down to its annual victory in the World Championship for the Bermuda Bowl there was an English expression, invented perhaps by the late S. J. Simon, author of *Why You Lose at Bridge*, used to describe our master players. They were called "spade" because they were not unlucky experts; the reason was that they won more often at duplicate than at rubber bridge, as they continue to do.

Those who do not play for money stakes will never be the equal of their Continental rivals, because they will be more influenced by a system than by intuitive judgment, which needs to be cultivated. The greatest players during the last 12 years have been accepted as the Italian team mates Benito Garozzo and Giorgio Belladonna. Today Belladonna may be considered as outstanding because he has the unique faculty of being able to select the better of two lines of play when there seems to be no choice between them.

When they formed part of Omar Sharif's so-called travelling circus they seemed to inspire their opponents with nervousness and to bid their own hands with unnatural confidence, even at times when the contract should have been defeated.

Now we see him again in the South seas, still playing as a member of Omar Sharif's circus but against two of the most powerful players in America, North-South game; dealer East.

The bidding at both tables was similar, but Belladonna's dummy play was of the highest order, unlike that of his American counterpart.

Where Jacby was South, the auction was:

1st Spade North East South
2nd Hearts 2 Spades 2 Hearts No
3rd Hearts No 3 Hearts No No

North was held to nine tricks and the Italians scored points in both rooms. It would seem that hypnotism alone preserved Belladonna from a spade attack after his optimistic bidding.

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2nd Hearts 2 Spades 2 Hearts No
3rd Hearts No 3 Hearts No No

North was held to nine tricks and the Italians scored points in both rooms. It would seem that hypnotism alone preserved Belladonna from a spade attack after his optimistic bidding.

The Hill Club, where the waiters still wear snow white gloves and a log fire burns in the hearth, would cheer the heart and stomach of a true colonial, right down to Hot Chocolate Roll served before the coffee and the kumquat available after it.

The road south of Nuwara Eliya is the most attractive in Sri Lanka. The tea plantations give way to rice fields, a paler shade of green, and then Ella, which has probably the spruce and best situated rest house on the island, the plain comes into view. The south-east corner of Sri Lanka is arid scrub and much of it is given over to the Yala Wildlife Park.

At midday, as you skirt it, there is nothing to be seen: Yala needs a visit of several days and the readiness to be at the observation posts at dawn. The coast is reached at Hambantota, a hot and dusty town surrounded by salt pans which provide such revenue as comes in. The luckless creatures are the water buffaloes up to their snouts in ooze or the marsh birds which wheel over them. The first resort to attract, moving west along the coast, is Tangalla, where the trees again begin to take on some lushness.

The southern extremity of Sri Lanka is only just beginning to open up to the tourists, except for Galle, which used to be the island's major port before Colombo usurped the position. Galle remains a walled city, as it was when the Dutch ruled here, apart from the British-constructed entry gate. The Grand Hotel, with its enormous rooms, including one for billiards, keeps its distance from the town. Indeed the only neighbour is appears to be the Hill Club, which once catered for Colombo society and now takes tourists from all over the world. Club rules are prominently displayed in the hall and locally distilled spirits are served. But the Hill Club still has a proper wine list: we resisted the temptation of Winacuram at £5.50 and sailed for a red from Lake Obudu in southern Yugoslavia.

John Higgins



The unknown factor in the rig disaster

A disaster of the scale which has hit the mobile accommodation rig, Alexander Kielland, in the Norwegian sector of the North Sea, involving so great a loss of life, is bound to raise questions over the long-term safety of all semi-submersibles operating offshore.

The accident has come as a profound shock to all in the offshore industry. Of all disasters, it was the last they expected to occur. Oilmen continually fear a "blow-out" with crude gushing uncontrollably from a well in scenes reminiscent of early petroleum exploration in the United States. The worst imaginable disaster is that such an oil gusher could catch fire, incinerating workers and equipment alike.

All safety procedures are designed with the blow-out in mind. It is an unhappy coincidence that the only one to occur so far in the North Sea which has run out of control was in the same Ekofisk complex of fields operated by the American independent Phillips Petroleum, in which the Alexander Kielland overturned.

Blow-outs are a risk that all offshore workers are aware of as soon as they step on a working drilling rig. The risk of capsizing in most circumstances is inconceivable.

The loss of the Alexander Kielland is, so far, inexplicable. Although weather conditions were severe, they were not so severe by North Sea standards that they should have come anywhere near threatening the design limits of this type of rig. Displacing 12,105 tons, it would be capable of taking a deckload of at least 2,000 tons. It has relatively luxurious accommodation, including the ill-fated cinema in which many

men may have perished, for more than 200 workers. The size, in short, of a small hotel, with space left for a drilling derrick and helicopter pad. It would have automatically tensioned wire rope anchors and was capable of moving under its own power.

The design—a Pentagon type with five legs resting on ballasted pontoons working on a similar principle to a submarine to keep the structure stable in a swell—was well tried. Similar rigs operate all round the world. In the United Kingdom sector alone 22 are being used for drilling. Either as accommodation or drilling rigs they should shrug off storm 10 winds and 35 ft waves. Only the kind of storm which would be the worst for 100 years should be a risk.

If the storm had been near to the worst example in, say, 50 years, the accident might have been understandable. Estimates of breaking strains can never be foolproof. The storm that sent this rig over, was not of that magnitude.

Some failure must therefore have occurred with catastrophic consequences. The question all North Sea companies need to know with urgency is could it happen again?

The accident that happened to the Alexander Kielland is not the first to happen in the North Sea. In 1965, Sea Gem, a rig which had been drilling for gas, capsized as it was preparing to move off location with the loss of 13 lives. Comparison between Sea Gem and the Alexander Kielland, however, is limited.

The rigs were of completely different type and in the intervening years far more has been learnt of the fatigues caused to metal structures by the North

sea wind and waves. Recommendations in a report after the Sea Gem disaster should have ensured that the Alexander Kielland was so designed that no single failure would have caused a major accident.

Sudden failure should simply not occur. The speed with which the Ekofisk rig overturned, giving so little time for the well-drilled evacuation procedures to be put into effect, is intensely worrying. Until it is known whether poor inspection was a contributory cause to the accident, the prospect remains that extensive and time consuming modifications will need to be made, delaying both exploratory drilling and development work.

Any question mark over the semi-submersible's long-term future is the last thing the oil industry needs at this juncture.

Norway prides itself on its offshore safety procedures. It believes that they are stricter than those imposed by any other country. Britain's energy department believes that while its own regulations may not be as strict as those of Norway, they are nevertheless as effective. This view is shared by a dissenting note in the committee of Offshore Safety set up under the chairmanship of Dr Jack Burgoynes, an industrial safety consultant, to review British safety procedures following the blow-out on the Brava platform on the Ekofisk field in 1977.

The dissenting note was signed by the two trade union representatives and backed by the Trades Union Congress. Norway has removed the responsibility for safety from the Department of Energy to a separate safety executive. Ev-



Before the capsizing: the Alexander Kielland (right) alongside its production rig.

dence was given to the committee that this provided a rougher inspection system than in the United Kingdom and it is recommended, against the majority opinion of the committee, by the TUC and the trade union representatives.

What evidence there is, however, suggests that there is little difference between the accident record of the British and Norwegian systems. In fact the Alexander Kielland disaster so far outweighs anything that has occurred before that it looks likely to outstrip all fatalities from this year working for the past five years. Between 1974 and 1979 there were 54 deaths,

16 from diving, and 212 serious accidents. Several recommendations were made by the Burgoynes committee to improve the accident record offshore, but principally the report was concerned with everyday industrial mishaps which occur anywhere there is heavy moving machinery and men working at heights, and with emergency procedures for blow-outs.

An inquiry into the latest disaster will need to consider the workings and inspections of the independent certifying authorities, which satisfy themselves as to the seaworthiness of mobile rigs before allowing them to set sail. There is some

dispute over safety classifications of mobile platforms used as offshore hotels between the United Kingdom Department of Energy and the Offshore Operators' Association. This will now be sorted out with some urgency. Burgoynes considered the independent certifying authorities worked well.

On television it struck me at least, that Sir Geoffrey was giving a far more upbeat record of reward than he had in the very cautious Budget speech. There, after two hours, it was only in his last words that he was sure that success was within our grasp. After all, democratic politicians must hold out some hope.

But by evening, after an appeal for patience, it was talk after a couple of years of things turning right again. By the next day, although it had already

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in the fine print of the Budget documents, there was talk of getting income tax right down in two years' time. Mr Nigel Lawson had already made one splash with his generous interpretation of a Brussels document that he thought opened the way to Britain's EEC budget crisis. Now the financial secretary to the Treasury expansively discussed the options, if the Government's economic strategy worked, from 1983 onwards to "accommodate a 25 per cent basic rate of tax".

The obvious question arises here regarding the Chancellor's most emotive Budget change. If recovery is only two years away, thanks to North Sea oil and the Government's tightening squeeze on public spending, how on earth, when more unemployment is inevitable in the interim, can it be justifiable to cut the value of unemployment and other short-term social security benefits?

The Government's answer is that those on benefit must bear their share of the general decline. But fair shares can have a bitter taste. Are not those being made unemployed thereby suffering a worse decline than those remaining in work? Maintaining benefits in line with the rise in prices would not, after all, imply any real increase.

The Chancellor, of course, declared that "clearly no action we take should be at the expense of the really weak and needy". But will all consciences be salved by seeing their number grow?—and so ensure that they will fall inside the "safety net", in which, admittedly, generous provision has been made? Sir Geoffrey can be acquitted. I am sure, of the bolder charges that he has deliberately set out to attack certain sections of the community. But nonetheless, by his political insensitivity, he allows both the Labour Party and the unions to make great play with the notion that all the Conservatives wish to do is gratify some populist urge to punish people seen as deliberate scroungers or wayward strikers.

And there is a real between the Hayley Howe approach, as Mr Joel Bennett of the Labour Treasury Minister, and the Conservative approach, as Mr. Michael Heseltine. The former does not believe that public expenditure can go on being the way the Government proposes, especially in the immediate recession ahead. The former argument is that the cur-

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Fred Emery

The finest persuader in sight

The Budget could in future be put over on television, in about 15 minutes. In Sir Geoffrey Howe we have an excellent performer. Direct to camera (if not in interviews) he is probably the most effective and natural persuader in this Cabinet. Certainly he is far better on the box than at the Dispatch Box. As viewers saw on Wednesday evening, he managed, with the odd chart, to put the message across. But which

trough before things get the Government is g need all the cooperation to bring inflation under control. Monetarism alone will not be enough. Yet it has dell turned away from the popular steps that could made an impression on members, if not their ship, (as well as on the backbenchers). Child the one payment that working as well as non families, is the obvious

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SIGHT THE KAMPUCHEAN COCKPIT

Outside aid has temporarily alleviated the appalling sufferings of Kampuchea, but the problem is far from solved. There is still danger of severe famine recurring, especially if planning for the next rice crop is insufficient. It would therefore be tragic if western aid dried up after so much effort. A timely reminder of this has now come from members of the United States congress who have introduced a resolution calling for more American and international aid, for the withdrawal of foreign troops, and for the convening of an international conference to end the fighting and establish a representative government in Kampuchea.

Fortunately, there has been some reduction in the fighting, when the dry season began in Kampuchea last November. The Vietnamese resumed their campaign against the Khmer Rouge guerrillas, reducing the territory held but not driving them out of the borders. Since then a campaign seems not to have been pressed. Perhaps Vietnam's appalling economic condition is at last assumed the greater, or perhaps the Russians, a sole source of military supplies, think it better for the pro-Samrin government to look after those people it does administer than to bother with the urgent task of mopping up guerrillas who cannot hope to reassert their power. Not least, may be thought that Vietnam's international status could not profit from yet another fierce campaign filling the media with counts of a new flood of refugees crossing into Thailand. In any case this abstention from campaigning is likely to go on, since Heng Samrin's visit to Moscow earlier this month has seen for themselves what backwoodsman unapologetic politicians are by comparison with their Vietnamese supporters.

Stimulated by this unforeseen

break the Khmer Rouge have been putting a new face on things. Their leadership was reshaped last December, with the murderous Pol Pot left in the shadows as a guerrilla leader only. Mr Khiem Samphan has stepped forward as the fluent spokesman of the new line, entertaining foreign correspondents in style at a secret base in Kampuchea. Since then he has been to Peking and Pyongyang while his counterparts from Phnom Penh were guests in Moscow. Can this new face be trusted? It is hard to believe that this rapacious leopard will have changed its spots in practice, however much Khiem Samphan's assurances represent his own wishes. It seems likely that Chinese pressure now can be, and has been, applied to the Khmer Rouge as threatened guerrillas, pressure which Peking felt unable to apply while their Kampuchean friends still had the status of an independent government in Phnom Penh.

With the Vietnamese determined that only a government subservient to their wishes can rule in Phnom Penh and with the Chinese equally determined that the Khmer Rouge guerrillas will continue to harass their opponents, and perhaps even gain support as stout upholders of Khmer nationalism against the hated Vietnamese, what hope is there for peace, order and progress in suffering Kampuchea? Not much, it must be admitted: nor is any initiative likely to succeed. When leaders of the one-time CIA-supported anti-communist Khmer Serei fight self-interested battles for a critical border and an exhausting refugee problem. An approach made by ASEAN has already met with some response from Hanoi. A regional rather than any international agreement seems now to offer the best hope for a recovery of Kampuchea's independence. Meanwhile the western world should not forget the sufferings of the population.

can international action at the United Nations or through any other channels hope to achieve anything while China is directly involved on one side and Vietnam is backed by the Russians on the other.

Is there, then, no political way to restore the moderate, non-aligned independence that the country knew under Prince Sihanouk's rule in the fifties and sixties, before the Vietnam war brought its horrifying disasters? Sadly the truth must be faced that in a country so lacking in political literacy it is difficult to define combinations that might form a new centre of political power. There is scarcely even a body politic any more, when so many members of the small educated class have been done away with. In any case, the chances of salvation coming from within a country so dominated by outside rivalry must be small. Relations between China, Russia and Vietnam continue to define the problem.

That leaves the ASEAN countries as best placed to propose a way out for Kampuchea. Since the fall of Phnom Penh and Saigon five years ago these countries have been the most threatened by Vietnamese power, arrogance and intransigence. In the process the group has matured much more quickly than ever seemed likely ten years ago, when ASEAN was little more than an idea taking shape. The frontline state most deserving of sympathetic support has been Thailand where General Kriangsak's replacement this month by General Prem should not alter the steady handling of a critical border and an exhausting refugee problem. An approach made by ASEAN has already met with some response from Hanoi. A regional rather than any international agreement seems now to offer the best hope for a recovery of Kampuchea's independence. Meanwhile the western world should not forget the sufferings of the population.

OO MUCH LEAD ABOUT

Professor Lawther's report on lead pollution, published yesterday, is a work of scrupulous scientific caution. It assesses risks, in so far as they can be assessed, but it makes little attempt to go further and weigh the costs and advantages of minimising them. That judgment, which will be partly an economic one and partly a political one in response to the extent of public concern, must be made by the Government. Lead pollution in car exhausts has become a controversial issue in the past year or two. There have been demonstrations, and actions, and several court cases pending against oil companies on behalf of children allegedly harmed by lead emissions from traffic. In its defence, the motor industry has stressed the expense of foreign exchange and scarce resources of erecting guards against a danger that remains unproven. A joint study by the industry and the Ministry of Transport last year put the cost of lead-free petrol at 10p a litre, and the extra energy consumption at five per cent. Special filters on car exhausts would produce similar effects for about £75m a year. Several other countries have nevertheless considered it worthwhile to adopt or move towards

the satisfaction of the Lawther committee.

When the alleged effects include impairment of intelligence, difficulty in concentrating, a tendency to headaches and that vague manifestation, hyperactivity, clear proof becomes extremely hard. People living in inner cities tend to have unusually high concentrations of lead in their blood, and children in such areas very often do poorly in intelligence tests, for a variety of reasons. But no evidence establishes a causal connexion to the satisfaction of the Lawther committee.

much tighter restrictions than anything contemplated here.

The Lawther report will not satisfy either side. It treats with reserve the studies that have seemed to indicate a causal link between lead from petrol and impaired health or ability among children. But its reservations are of a kind that should not breed complacency. It is not in dispute that lead is a poison. It can kill, and in smaller doses it can cause lasting damage to the central nervous system. Children are especially vulnerable. The question is whether prolonged exposure to still smaller doses (within the limits set by WHO and EEC standards that Britain accepts) can do harm that is real, though impossible to measure by existing techniques—and whether car exhausts contribute significantly to such exposure.

When the alleged effects include impairment of intelligence, difficulty in concentrating, a tendency to headaches and that vague manifestation, hyperactivity, clear proof becomes extremely hard. People living in inner cities tend to have unusually high concentrations of lead in their blood, and children in such areas very often do poorly in intelligence tests, for a variety of reasons. But no evidence establishes a causal connexion to the satisfaction of the Lawther committee.

between Iraq and Iran to relations between Iraq and Britain. I am, Sir, your obedient servant, ANTHONY KERSHAW, Chairman, Foreign Affairs Select Committee, House of Commons, March 28.

Hotels and the homeless

From Lord Longford and Mr Vaughan Jones

Sir, It is quite correct for the Bishop of Stepney and the Auxiliary Bishop of Westminster to insist (March 24) that the anger felt after the recent fires in hostels for the homeless, be focused in the right direction. New Horizon Youth Centre has for the past 11 years been giving advice and support to homeless and rootless young people in the West End of London. It is clear that the substandard accommodation available to them is not only degrading but also puts at risk both health and safety. The only alternative that many people have to overcrowded hostels, however, is the street.

In recent years we have seen an increasing number of young people without permanent accommodation and in the early months of this year the increase has been alarming, being over 100 per cent on the same period last year. We find the referrals we make cannot be based primarily on our professional judgment but on the simple expediency of where beds are available and this will be in common lodging houses, night shelters and reception centres.

Since the situation at present is far from satisfactory, then it is with real alarm that we view the future. Our own financial position is very insecure. Inflation has reduced greatly the value of our income. It is increasingly difficult to secure trust funding as many agencies under threat seek alternatives to statutory income. At the same time there is a serious question mark over our own major source of government funding.

We have no guarantees beyond March 1981. We have already reduced our staff and our resources are stretched to their absolute limit.

As our own position becomes

more and more difficult, so does that of other agencies with whom we work. The reduction of services to those with alcohol and drug problems and the mentally ill; the lack of good, cheap, independent accommodation for single people; the effect of unemployment in the regions and the decreasing value of social security payments begins to create a very grim picture of real rise in the numbers of destitute and alienated people. Many of these live in the who attend New Horizon, will be young. Our own agency is still enthusiastic, energetic and imaginative in its approach but desperately handicapped by the lack of resources.

The tragedy of the fire at the Missionaries of Charity House will be compounded again and again in the years to come through fire, disease, alcoholism, drug abuse, crime, mental illness and the breakdown of relationships. There must be some major reversals in public expenditure and housing policies if our city streets are not themselves to become overcrowded by those looking for a bed. The victims of the tragedy will remain those least able to protect themselves.

Yours sincerely,
FRANK LONGFORD, Chairman, R. VAUGHAN JONES, Coordinator, New Horizon Youth Centre Ltd, 1 Macklin Street, WC2.

Imprisonment of witnesses

From Mrs Margaret Wiggs

Sir, For justice to be done "without fear or favour" (the words of the magisterial oath) it is essential that witnesses come freely to court to give evidence. In the hung juries case reported on March 20, two witnesses who had been charged with and convicted of no offence were taken from the court to prison for refusing to be bound over. The binding over of persons other than defendants may sometimes be appropriate, but the imprisonment of witnesses has serious implications far beyond this case.

Yours faithfully,
MARGARET WIGGS, Fairfield House, Biggleswade, Bedfordshire.

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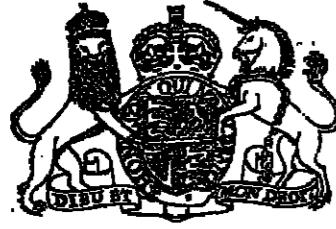
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COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE

March 28: The Duke of Edinburgh, as Chancellor, this morning watched the Cambridge University Boat Club crew in training at Putney, and afterwards was present at luncheon with members of the Club at the Hurlingham Club.

His Royal Highness, attended by Wing Commander Antony Nicholson, travelled in an aircraft of The Queen's Flight.

The Princess Anne, Mrs Mark Phillips, President, the Save the Children Fund, this afternoon at Buntingford, Herts, received a cheque, on behalf of the Fund, from members of the cast of the show "The King and I".

Her Royal Highness, this afternoon opened the London Transport Museum, Covent Garden, and was received with a civic reception by His Majesty's Lord Lieutenant for Greater London (the Baroness Phillips) and the Chairman of London Transport Executive (Mr R. Bennett).

The Hon Mrs Legge-Bourke was in attendance.

The Princess Anne, Mrs Mark Phillips, was present this evening at the Royal Air Force Anniversary Concert. In aid of the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund (Chairman, the Lord Catto) at the Royal Festival Hall.

Her Royal Highness, attended by Miss Victoria Legge-Bourke, was received upon arrival by the Director, South Bank Music Hall (Mr M. Kaye).

Birthdays today

The Earl of Bessborough, 67; Sir Christopher Chancerell, 75; Mr Stephen Chevally, 80; Sir Geoffrey Harmsworth, 76; Mr Jack Jones, 67; Sir Arthur Knight, 63; Miss Sybil Law, 49; the Hon Ewen Montagu, QC, 23; Sir John Pease, 62; Sir Cecil Sykes, 71; Sir Mark Turner, 74; Sir William Walton, OM, 78; TOMORROW: Sir Robert Armstrong, 54; Professor Sir Ernest Gombrich, 71; Sir Andrew McColl, 66; Sir Derek Rayner, 54; Sir Peter Sculthorpe, 75; Mr Herbert van Thal, 76.

Harrow School

The spring term at Harrow ended yesterday. Mr C. P. Molony is leaving the staff to take up an appointment overseas.

The Cock House match was won by Harrow (Mr J. H. Gould), who beat West Acle (Mr D. J. Parry) by 2 goals to 2. The Torpid final was won by Moreton (Mr C. D. Summer), who beat West Acle by 6 goals to 5.

The school choral society and the school chamber orchestra performed Bach's St. John Passion on Friday evening, March 31. Next term begins on Monday, April 28.

Mrs Christopher Maxwell Reeves gave birth to a son in Newbury on March 27.

Forthcoming

marriages

Mr D. F. Badenoch and Miss M. F. Howard. The engagement is announced between David, youngest son of Mr and Mrs Alec Badenoch, of Lea, Malmesbury, Wiltshire, and Michelle, younger daughter of Dr Patricia Thomas, of Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol.

Mr J. E. O. Mepham and Miss R. F. Garcia. The engagement is announced between John, only son of Mr and Mrs J. E. Mepham, of Chalk, Grange, and Mrs Rhonda, only daughter of Mrs Betty Garcia, of Manila, the Philippines.

Lieutenant P. McNaughton and Miss K. F. Hennessy. The engagement is announced between Peter, eldest son of Captain and Mrs James McNaughton, of Franschoek, Cape Province, South Africa, and Katherine, second daughter of Mr and Mrs James Hennessy, Belize House, Belmopan, Belize.

Mr M. J. Williamson and Miss S. M. Kilpatrick. The engagement is announced between Martin, eldest son of the Revd Mr and Mrs Williamson, of Gray, Essex, and Susan, daughter of Mrs A. Smith and the late Mr J. Kilpatrick, of Southampton, Hampshire.

Marriages

Mr J. R. Kirkman and Miss A. C. Wilkins. The marriage took place quietly yesterday at Brompton Oratory between Mr James Kirkman, 26, and his young son General Sir Sidney and Lady Kirkman, of Lytham, Lancashire, and Miss Alexandra, late Wilkins, only daughter of the late Mr Geoffrey Wilkins and Mrs Wilkins, of London. Captain Hugh Barrett-Lennard officiated.

The bride was given in marriage by her brother, Mr Rupert Wilkins. Mr Charles Kirkman was best man. The honeymoon will be spent in Dorset.

Mr G. A. Pearson and Miss J. M. Struthers. The marriage took place at Trinity College, Cambridge, on March 22 of Mr George Pearson, second son of Professor and Mrs J. R. A. Pearson, of Chaucer Road, Cambridge, and Miss Jane Struthers, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs M. H. Struthers, of Pemberley Avenue, Bedford.

Services tomorrow:

Palm Sunday

ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL: 11.15. H. B. Bunting and distribution of palms and HC. 10.30: Dark in Introit. Hosanna in the Highest. The organist's solo. According to St Matthew's (Borromeo) Canon, Coll. B. Hollins' (Cantilena Regale) Canon. Gloria, and nonnos et laudes. The organist's solo. According to St Matthew's "Crucifixion". WESTMINSTER ABBEY: Solemn procession and sung requiem. 10.30. R. H. Williams, Organist and Laud. Organist of Westminster Abbey. Wm. Williams and Laud. Organist of Westminster Abbey. Wm. Williams and Laud. Organist of Westminster Abbey.

WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL: 9.30. H. B. Bunting and distribution of palms and HC. 10.30: Dark in Introit. Hosanna in the Highest. The organist's solo. According to St Matthew's (Borromeo) Canon, Coll. B. Hollins' (Cantilena Regale) Canon. Gloria, and nonnos et laudes. The organist's solo. According to St Matthew's "Crucifixion".

WESTMINSTER ABBEY: Solemn procession and sung requiem. 10.30. R. H. Williams, Organist and Laud. Organist of Westminster Abbey. Wm. Williams and Laud. Organist of Westminster Abbey.

THE QUEEN'S CHAPEL OF THE SAINTS (QUEEN'S HOUSE): 11.15. V. Young. H. B. Bunting.

ROYAL NAVAL COLLEGE CHAPEL, GREENWICH: 11.30. H. B. Bunting. M. M. D. V. Evans.

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THE

SPORT
Racing

Not even the rain should stop Zongalero

By Michael Phillips
Racing Correspondent

When I was in Ireland last week I visited the Longfield stud in County Tipperary, principally to see the two resident stallions, Home Guard and Zongalero. While there, I took the opportunity to ask the manager, the former champion jump jockey Tommy Stack, what he would like to be riding in this year's Grand National. He replied, without hesitation, Zongalero.

Having won a National on Red Rum and also finishing second on the same horse, Stack is in a better position than most to judge because I have thought for a long time that Zongalero is capable of going one better than he did a year ago. Nothing that has happened recently makes me want to change my mind at this late stage—not even all the rain that has fallen in the area in the last 72 hours or the fact that some of my stable companions have been off colour lately.

I visited Zongalero out at exercise earlier this week and he looked a picture of health and fitness. "A very well horse and a much stronger horse than he was a year ago" was his trainer Nick Henderson's bulletin on dismounting him. I have to say I don't know because he has ridden him in almost all of his fast work during a season when his sole objective has been today's big race.

Later that morning Henderson showed me the results of Zongalero's latest blood test taken the previous day. Compared with all his other tests at this time during the winter it looked just as good as it had done in October. Incidentally while he has been in Isolation, Zongalero has been stabled in a box that was once occupied by that legendary racehorse, Golden Miller, who also won the Grand National. Today will tell whether that box still retains its magic.

As for the ground at Liverpool, Zongalero is as well as most and probably better than most. After all, he did manage to win the Mandarin Scramble on very soft ground at Newbury towards the end of December.

The speed which Zongalero has shown in his last few runs is the stamina which was so evident on this day a year ago, when only Rumbustic beat him, make him an ideal National horse. That stamina is necessary to last four and a half miles at the constant racing speed is vital too because the horse has to take a good position early on, then hold it and hopefully stay clear of interference. Last year Zongalero was up the front most of the way, jumping up and down, but this afternoon again this afternoon he will take some catching, more especially on soft ground, and he is my selection.

I know that Bob Davies, who rode him last year, would have

loved to have been on his back again, but this time Zongalero will be ridden by Henderson's young stable jockey, Steve Smith Eccles, and he could easily be in for the thrill of his life in his first National. Davies was standing by to ride Zongalero in case anything happened to Smith Eccles, but now that all is well he has been snapped up by another—the Vimmer. He should have a good ride on this horse too, providing that it is none the worse for falling in the Gold Cup.

When The Vimmer won at Newmarket in January, he proved conclusively that he stays really well and that he copes with the sort of testing conditions underfoot that he will encounter this afternoon. There is still a feeling, however, that he may well see something akin to an action replay of his last finish when Rumbustic beat Zongalero, Rough and Tumble, The Pugilistic, Wagner and Tumble.

Prince Rock, though, is a mud-

loving, the favourite, has 11th more to carry than when he was successful a year ago. He has never fallen in 67 races over jumps, has conquered Aintree once and is a proved mudlark: what more could you want. In the circumstances he seems bound to make his presence felt again, always to the benefit of the field when he runs in the race three years ago, his jockey came over the fence first when he half-reversed and fell at the finish.

Prince Rock is the only horse with the best record in the race. He has won it already with E. S. R. Nicolas Silver, Gay Trip and Rag Trade, and in an attempt to win it a fifth time he will be saddling four runners this afternoon—Royal Frolic, Another Dolly, The Pugilistic and Godfrey Seconds.

Before the National, Monkfield fought to end his racing career on a triumph note by winning the Queen Elizabeth II Stakes at Cheltenham. Their successes were in the Topham Trophy in 1975 and 1977 respectively.

It is not necessary to say the

more likely to last this marathon is Jer, one of comparatively few to have won over as far as four miles; Jer is another who has never fallen. So And So, Deinosa, Three To One and Rambler are others who should not mind the soft ground. Indeed, Three To One has won it already with F. T. Tuck in the first four. Rubens aside, Our Greenwood and Cheltenham Town Boy are the only horses in the field of 32 to have won around Liverpool. Their successes were in the Topham Trophy in 1975 and 1977 respectively.

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Drug found in Gold Cup winner came from cocoa

Continued from page 1

last night: "I've had no official notification yet. This is all a complete surprise to me."

"I've been using the same feed for over 10 years, and never had any trouble. In fact I've never had a horse disqualified after a routine dope test" (the Press Association reports).

Restricted drug: The Equine Research Station at Newmarket said that theobromine was a myocardial stimulant, or a stimulant which acted on the heart muscle. It was sometimes used for the treatment of angina and for arterioclerosis in humans (a Staff Reporter writes).

Mr Peter Twite, secretary of the Racecourse Security Service, said that theobromine was derived from the cocoa bean.

In many cases where horses were found to have theobromine in their urine, it turned out that the cause was in their feed, said Twite.

Windfall for farmer: The second horse in the Gold Cup, Master Smudge, is owned and trained by Mr Arthur Barrow, a farmer at Bridgwater, Somerset.

When told the news that he would probably get the first prize money of nearly £36,000, Mr Barrow said: "I can't believe it. Are you sure this is not a hoax?"

Mr Twite said: "It's a bit

Jarvis stable falls foul of stewards

By Michael Seely

The rain continued to pour down on Grand National eve at Aintree. It is to be hoped that this sodden ground will not spoil this great spectacle. Reports were ripe before racing that Zongalero and Deinosa had been beaten. However, Nick Henderson was able to assure me that the 10-year-old's owner, David Monks, had won the race, a 15-year-old.

Although Zongalero would be a better going, he is a consistent selection to turn the tables on last year's winner, Rubic.

The crowd were treated to a grandstand finish in the Ascot Handicap Hurdle. Stutter, apparently an unlucky loser when falling at the last flight in the Triumph Hurdle at Cheltenham, gave Peter Easterby handsome consolation for that misfortune, when holding the challenge of Hill Slane by a neck. Hill Slane, however, was not the only one to like Stutter. Easterby said after the result of the photograph had been announced, both Andy Turnell and Bill Hill of Slane's team, Alastair Jarvis, were reported to the stewards for excessive use of the whip.

Mr Easterby, who has won 107 races at Aintree, said: "I'm not a whiper. I've never hit a horse. I'm a good horseman."

Mr T. D. T. Durnell, the senior steward, said: "As Lord Derby's horse, Stutter, was the best horse in the race, he deserved the award."

Mr Dickenson was in searching for a double with Wayward Lad in the Maghull Novices' Hurdle and with New Colour in the St. Leger. Both were reported to the stewards for excessive use of the whip.

Mr Dickenson, the owner of the Grand National fancy Al Blackie, received a double, it is hoped, when Fred Russell and Alastair Jarvis, the two winners of the St. Leger and the 10-year-old's stablemate, Tommy Carroway, the 72 successes is one more to be had this year.

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THE TIMES

BUSINESS NEWS

Further rise in US prime lending rates as credit demand continues

From Frank Vogl
US Economics Correspondent
Washington, March 28

Major American commercial banks raised their prime lending rates yet again to record levels today as bankers and economists warned that rates may well go still higher.

Citibank lifted its rate from 19 per cent to 19½ per cent, while Chemical Bank of New York and the Continental Illinois of Chicago raised their rates 1 per cent to 19½ per cent.

As the day developed, more and more banks moved to the 19½ and 20 per cent rates for their most creditworthy large customers. The increases are being attributed to the continuing high demand for credit from all sectors, and to the tighter credit policies imposed by the Federal Reserve Board two weeks ago.

In addition, there is speculation that the Fed is worried that its efforts to restrain consumer credit are not working well. There is talk by some Fed officials of additional refinements to the recently announced margin requirements on additions to outstanding credit card.

Throughout last year the Hunt brothers were continual speculators in the New York and Chicago commodity markets and it is believed that a few of their overseas friends were also striving to corner the market—obtain so much silver that they could dictate the global price, afeat last done in 1717 by the "Old Lady of Threadneedle Street," according to the Hunt brothers.

The silver price, largely because of buying by the Hunts and their friends, soared last year from an opening of \$3.97 an ounce up to \$18 by October, then on to

versity of California have just come out with a forecast that the prime might go as high as 22 per cent.

Bankers do not believe a possible Fed move to still tighten policies will be influenced simply by the latest money stock figures. They suggest that the Fed might fear a reaction in the currency markets to the recent sharp rise in the dollar. As a result, yesterday's record balance of trade deficit for the last two months of more than \$10,000m.

There are also indications that the Fed is worried that its efforts to restrain consumer credit are not working well. There is talk by some Fed officials of additional refinements to the recently announced margin requirements on additions to outstanding credit card.

In London yesterday, trading remained nervous in the Stock Market, as dealers pondered over the Chancellor's latest proposal while continuing to keep a close eye on the latest events on Wall Street. Equities and Gilts continued to drift lower, although no real selling pressure was evident. The FT Index closed 1.6 off at 421.5.

Dollar strong: The dollar gained ground in most European centres as rumours of an increase in European prime spread. At one point it was well over DM1.95 but it slipped back in later trading to close at DM1.925 in Frankfurt.

The pound closed at \$2.1745, down 10 points against the dollar, but the Bank of England's effective exchange rate index rose by 0.1 percentage points to close at 72.6.

This was below the top level for the day, however, which was 72.8 per cent of the pound's 1971 worth.

Dealing was mostly light and there was only limited intervention from central banks but the latest gains by the United States currency mark the end of another week in which it has made strong advances.

Stock markets
FT Ind 421.5 down 1.6
FT Gilts 64.02 down 0.28

Sterling
\$2.1745 down 10 points
Index 72.6 up 0.1

Dollar
Index 90.3

Gold
\$485 up \$12

Money
3-mth sterling 18.4-18.5
3-mth Euro S 19.1-19.2
6-mth Euro S 19.4-19.5

IN BRIEF

P confirms premium in oil from Kuwait

Irish Petroleum confirmed it will pay a premium on of the 150,000 barrels a day crude oil it is being allowed in Kuwait. The premium is set to be \$5.50 a barrel or of the official Kuwait price 27.50.

Elbow closing

Engineering is closing steelworks at Easingtonfield, with the loss of 660 but says the move is not a result of the steel strike. The competition from its is given as the cause.

Waia IMF move

Waia is to remain a member of the International Monetary Fund but cancel negotiations with the IMF for balance of payments support. The government is likely to announce alternative economic strategy this weekend.

Energy-saving lamp

Lamps Goeleampenfabriek is marketing a miniature fluorescent lamp as an energy-saving cement for conventional lamps. The 10 watt light is said to be a quarter of the power of an ordinary 75 watt lamp.

Engines deal

A \$3m export order from Arabia for 4,000 diesel engines has been won by R. A. of Cinderford, Gloucestershire. Hawker Siddeley company. They should be delivered in nine months.

Land layoffs

Land and Wolff, the shipyard and the city's biggest employer, announced that 1,000 workers are to be laid off in the next few weeks. Redundancy notices were due out today to the first 250.

Trading study

The Federation of Civil Engineering Contractors has issued a report by independent economists to consider British investment in this with that of other countries. It will be presented to Government and local authorities in May.

Surplus

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) forecasts a surplus of around \$120,000m (£54,500m) for Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec) members but does not foresee problems in recycling funds. senior officials during OECD meetings in Paris yesterday.

Rigas features

A court in Milan has declared bankruptcy of five companies of the troubled Liquigase group—Liquigase Italia, ICI, Tresit, Liquigase and Robassomero. In other subsidiaries, with manufacturing plants in the United States, have been put under administration. They are in America, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador and Mexico.

PRICE CHANGES

ES
R & Dobson 15p to 15p
10p to 34p
Godfrey 27p to 16p
42p to 91p
121 Group 34p to 79p

HSBC
1p to 5p
10p to 35p
10p to 65p
10p to 465p
10p to 29p

Ladbrooke
7p to 129p
Milbury 49p to 54p
Municipal 10p to 45p
Saint Piran 3p to 86p
Ultramar 10p to 510p

Minerva
30p to 220p
Modern Eng 3p to 22p
Northgate 25p to 515p
Sentinel 25c to 600c
W. Rand Cons 50c to 600c

THE POUND

Bank **Bank**
buys sells
10.5 2.07 2.06
10.45 29.35 29.35
11.50 68.00 68.00
2.62 2.55 2.55
13.41 12.86 12.86
8.72 8.23 8.23
9.93 9.73 9.73
4.35 4.25 4.25
9.04 9.00 9.00
1.55 1.50 1.50
1.14 1.10 1.10
18.00 18.00 18.00
567.00 542.00 542.00
4.74 4.51 4.51

Rate for small denominations. No rates only for accepted remittance by bank or international bank.

Different rates apply to travellers' cheques and other foreign currency bureaux.

How Hunt brothers were caught in the great bullion collapse

Wall Street's silver panic

From Frank Vogl
United States Economics Correspondent
Washington, March 28

It was called the silver hunt on the trading floors of the American commodity trading exchanges as the vastly wealthy Texan brothers, Mr Nelson Bunker Hunt and Mr William Herbert Hunt, bought tons of silver.

Yesterday the price of silver collapsed, the Hunts were caught owing brokers tens of millions of dollars, Wall Street was hauled into a panic and one of the largest American brokerage companies looked as if it was in trouble.

Today Government authorities sought to cool the charged atmosphere on financial markets and it appeared that the crisis might not, in fact, be quite as dramatic as was first seemed likely. There is a chance that people in the markets have once again underestimated the full scale of the Hunts' fortunes.

The Hunts are reported by traders to have been buying 5,000 to 10,000 silver contracts in the markets, about 25 to 50 million ounces.

The price has fallen like a stone and the Hunts have had to put up more and more cash to cover their outstanding purchases. By Tuesday they needed to provide their brokers, Bache, Halsey, Stuart, Shields, Inc, the fifth largest American brokerage company, with about \$100m to cover losses on 20,000 silver contracts. The brothers said they could not pay immediately, Bache then felt forced to sell some silver to cover the liabilities of the Hunts; word spread and the panic was on.

Two separate kinds of fear spread through Wall Street. The first was that many brokerage houses might have clients

\$37 at the start of this year and up to a record of \$50.35 in January. The speculation became so fierce that the commodity markets became worried that there could be more buying of silver than was actually available—trading limits were imposed in January that calmed some of the speculation and the price dropped.

By Tuesday the silver price was down to \$16.25 and then, to the surprise and alarm of market operators, Mr Nelson Hunt appeared in Paris to make an announcement. He said he planned to issue bonds, backed by \$3,000m-worth of silver bullion owned by himself, his brother, Mr Nabil Nasas, an Arab now resident in Brazil, Prince Faisal Bin Abdullah Al-Saud, Mahmud Fustok and Shaikh Mohamed Al-Azouzi, all of Saudi Arabia. In the markets the view was that the Hunts needed some cash, and hence the bond selling plan.

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Two separate kinds of fear spread through Wall Street. The first was that many brokerage houses might have clients

with outstanding silver contracts and the houses might face massive losses. Bache was the centre of attention, not just because it was the silver broker for the Hunts, but also because the Hunts owned 450,000 Bache shares and had borrowed from Bache. So worried was the securities and Exchange Commission that the Hunts would dump Bache shares to raise cash and that Bache would be in financial trouble if it suspended trading in Bache shares for 10 days.

And then Wall Street also feared that the Hunts would start selling vast quantities of shares and bonds that they owned and so drive all market prices down. The Hunts did start selling shares and government bonds and the Dow Jones index fell 25 points. But then it recovered as it was realized that not even the Hunts could smash the already depressed markets.

Nobody knows just how wealthy the Hunts are and they are not telling. There have been estimates that the wealth of the Hunts exceeds \$4,000m—but more is needed to cover losses that could indeed total half this sum. The Hunts' problem is raising cash fast.

Michael Leapman writes: Dr Armand Hammer, the chairman of Occidental Petroleum, called a gleeful press conference today to announce that, unlike the Hunts brothers, he had made a profit of \$119m from the fluctuating silver and gold market.

He said that in January and February, when the price of the metal was at its peak, he had made forward contracts for sales now at those high rates.

£3,000m gas pipeline plan ready

By David Hewson

Plans for a £3,000m 400-mile gas pipeline network serving the North Sea are expected to be submitted to the Department of Energy early next month.

The scheme has been drawn up jointly by the British Gas Corporation and Mobil at the department's request.

The Government believes that the amount of gas in at least 12 fields in the North Sea is sufficient to make such a large gathering scheme worthwhile and hopes it can be operating by the mid-1980s.

The pipeline would have two branches, one going south as far as the British National Oil Corporation's 30/17b block, and the other extending north to the Magnus reservoir.

The branches would join close to the Brae field and come ashore near Peterhead in northeast Scotland, not far from where the existing oil pipeline from the Forties field and two gas lines now land.

British Gas would extract methane using existing facilities at St Fergus and other gases would travel by pipeline to the chemicals site at the Cromarty Firth.

The Department of Energy has reached no decision on the funding of the project, but it is expected that a consortium would be formed involving gas producers, British Gas, and possibly chemical companies such as ICI and Dow Chemical which are major gas customers. Dow is planning a gas-based petrochemical project on Cromarty Firth.

The new pipeline would complement the planned increase in exploration in the northern part of the North Sea. The seventh round of licences is expected to be announced shortly.

The five casinos concerned made profits last year of £1.1m, compared with the £1.8m or so estimated to have been made by the three Ladbrooke London casinos—the Ladbrooke Club, Hertford Club and the Park Lane Casino. Ladbrooke is appealing against court closure of these clubs after Gaming

Ladbrooke sells five casinos for £4.4m

By Richard Allen

Ladbrooke, the troubled betting and hotels group, is to sell five of its 11 provincial casinos in a £4.4m deal which could herald a complete withdrawal from the casino industry.

The casinos at Leeds, Birmingham, Bristol, Middlesbrough and Stockton are to be bought by the Reo Stakis Organization, the Glasgow-based hotels and gambling group, which already runs 12 provincial gaming houses.

Although the Ladbrooke Group is still fighting to regain licences for its three major London casinos which were closed down at the end of last year, the group has hinted strongly that it intends to pull out of the industry altogether.

Mr Geoff Spreckley, managing director of the casino subsidiary, said yesterday that talks were under way with other operators for the sale of the remaining six provincial casinos.

"We may be near the point where we feel we have taken quite enough stick over our casino operations," he said. "We owe it to our employees to preserve their jobs and to our shareholders to realize these assets on a going concern basis."

The Gaming Board was expected to have opposed Ladbrooke licences for the provincial houses at hearings in May and the Stakis deal is dependent on the authorities allowing these to be transferred.

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PERSONAL INVESTMENT AND FINANCE

Budget grouse

Any improvement in the burden of stamp duty was welcome, but the Chancellor's limited relief has introduced a measure of geographical discrimination which prospective purchasers in at least half the country will find hard to forgive.

By raising the starting point for the tax by only £5,000 to £20,000, the Budget has freed most new home owners in Yorkshire and Humberside, the North-west, East Midlands, Wales (just) and Scotland from the stamp duty net. Buyers living in the West Midlands, East Anglia, the South-west and the South-east, London and Northern Ireland will still have to pay it.

These generalizations are based on the average regional prices shown in *The Times*/Halifax monthly house price index and, while there will be buyers in some of

the more expensive areas who will not necessarily be subject to stamp duty, it will be a lucky couple living in London, the South-east and the South-west who escape paying this levy.

In his Budget speech Sir Geoffrey Howe specifically referred to the hardship on the lower end of the market, particularly for young couples. As it happens, the young couples already hardest hit because of house price inflation are those who live in areas beyond the scope of the modest improvement in stamp duty thresholds. Had the Chancellor lifted the starting point for stamp duty to £25,000, then more young couples putting their foot on the bottom rung of the housing ladder would have been immune. If duty has to stay, at least let it be applied in an equitable way.

Little change for most, but at least the widow benefits

What the Chancellor gave with one hand, he largely took away with the other. The famous Rooker-Wise clause which secured indexation of the main personal allowances in 1978 was implemented in full, but the effect of the 18 per cent increase in tax thresholds was abruptly cut down to size by the abolition of the 25 per cent reduced rate band.

The net result is that tax reliefs in the Budget go up by 11 per cent for married couples and by rather less for single people. Translated into pounds in the pocket, this means that a married couple earning (together or the husband alone) between £3,000 and £10,000 will be £61 a year better off—i.e., they will have just over £1 a week extra to spend. This will be quickly absorbed by the extra cost of a bottle of Scotch (duty up 50p) and 10 packets of cigarettes (duty up 5p per packet of 20).

The single taxpayer between the same limits does slightly less well. His or her extra cash amounts to only £25 a year. Later in the year, when the tax-free child benefit is increased from £4 to £4.75, the price of remaining single—or of staying married and acquiring the two children beloved of statisticians—will go up. The family man, on average industrial earnings of over £900 a week, will be £2.46 a week better off in November.

The loss of the 25 per cent

rate band may be regretted by basic rate taxpayers in that its abolition has permanently reduced the base for the future indexation of allowances. But there is evidence that it was not doing its job of easing the lot of the lower paid.

The Inland Revenue, of course, always disliked it because of its administrative inconvenience. That might sound as though much bureaucratic red tape, but it is significant for taxpayers, too. This year, the impact of the changes in allowances will be felt from June tax packets onwards.

The situation was muddled last year because of the change of Government and a second budget, but in the previous "normal" year, 1978, it took the Inland Revenue up to July 12 to implement the new codicils.

Other personal allowances, such as those for dependent relatives, or the services of a son or daughter, remain unchanged—as most of them have been for the past decade. The blind personal allowance was last increased from £130 in 1975-76. This, of course, is in line with the general, long-standing philosophy of simplifying the tax system.

So why, you might ask, did the Chancellor slip a new allowance into the lists? The widow's bereavement allowance of £720 maximum answers the plea of women's organizations and others who for years have

complained about the cut-off at death of the married man's personal allowance.

This widow's bereavement allowance effectively takes over when the married man's allowance ceases and is chiefly a transitional relief to enable a widow to adjust to her new financial circumstances. It is apportioned according to a time scale: if the husband dies in April, the widow will receive the full £720, which is reduced by twelfths for each successive month in the year. Pitched at the same rate as the additional personal allowance, it will also be indexed linked.

The higher rate tax bands and the threshold for the investment income surcharge rises by 10 per cent to £5,500.

The new higher rate tax bands have this year also been increased by 10 per cent, which has also the effect of widening the bands. To pay the top whack of 60 per cent, you will need a taxable income of £27,750.

The income "break point" from where husbands and wives should opt for separate taxation—which means they are both taxed as single people—has risen to £16,977, provided that the wife does not earn less than £4,352.

Once more, a government is preparing to tackle the question of taxation of husband and wife. The previous administration was moved by the publication in December 1977, by the Equal Opportunities Commission—which Sir Geoffrey's wife was then deputy chairman—of a booklet on discrimination against married women in the tax system. In August, 1978, it promised a Green Paper on family taxation, which was overtaken by events.

Although the Revenue has shed much of its misogynist approach, more needs to be done. The Chancellor has now picked up the baton and, although pointing out that "radical changes should not be made in haste", is promising a Green Paper later in the year.

Green Papers, for those who suffer from colour-blindness over government publications, are those involving debate, criticism and suggestions. So, be prepared....

Margaret Stone

MAIN INCOME TAX ALLOWANCES

	1979-80	1980-81
Personal allowances	£	£
Single person's and wife's earned income	1,165	1,375
Married man	1,815	2,145
Additional personal allowance for children (single parents, etc.)	650	770
Widow's bereavement allowance	—	770
Age allowance		
Single person (over 65)	1,540	1,820
Married couple (at least one over 65)	2,455	2,895
Reduced by £2 for every £3 of income over	5,000	5,900

RATES AND BANDS

	Income bands for 1979/80	Proposed for 1980/81
Lower rate band of income	750 charged at 25 per cent	—
Basic rate band of income	9,250 charged at 30 per cent	11,250 charged at 30 per cent
Higher rate band of income charged at 40 per cent	10,001-12,000	11,251-13,250
45 per cent	12,001-15,000	13,251-16,750
50 per cent	15,001-20,000	16,751-22,250
55 per cent	20,001-25,000	22,251-27,750
60 per cent	Over 25,000	Over 27,750

Income bonds

Dead; but new ones in the pipeline

The Budget axe fell as sharply as expected on short-term income bonds. The Chancellor's proposals effectively take away from these policies—in their pre-budget form—their qualification for tax relief. It was thanks to this tax relief in part that companies were able to pay returns of up to 19.5 per cent of basic rate tax on one-year bonds.

Now it is proposed that a policy will not qualify for tax relief if it is connected with another policy where the terms provide benefits which are greater than can reasonably be expected.

This official jargon strikes right at the heart of short-term bonds which were basically made up of two policies. The premium on one-year bonds was split roughly down the middle. One half funded a single premium policy which paid out all the income and was not a business proposition on its own for the issuing life company. The remainder was channelled into an annual premium policy, the sole purpose of which was to make the whole package qualify for life assurance premium relief.

Now companies await the publication of the Finance Bill to establish exactly what the Revenue means by a non-profitable policy and what yardstick it would use to measure this. But they say frankly that one and two-year bonds will not stand the test under any circumstances.

It is also doubtful that the longer four-year bonds written

on the same basis—that is, dependent on tax relief—will emerge with the stamp of approval. So these, too, which were offered by a wider range of companies than the shorter term bonds have also been withdrawn for the time being.

Four-year bonds which are not dependent on tax relief and therefore offer lower yields are unaffected by the Budget proposals.

If you joined the last-minute rush to buy the old bonds before the Budget you can take heart from the fact the proposals are not retrospective. But if you left it to the very last moment, though you have probably missed the boat, it is not clear whether premiums received on Wednesday morning will be caught by the proposals and the Revenue is giving no guidance on this point for the moment, though companies are generally not processing these applications.

Liberty Life, one of the leading exponents of short-term bonds has already announced a new series of bonds to replace those hit by the Chancellor.

The new bonds offer 12 per cent, net of basic rate tax, equivalent to 17.4 per cent gross, over three to five years.

Each bond comprises a single premium endowment assurance, which regards the original investment at maturity, and a series of single premium pure endowments maturing at yearly intervals, to provide the income.

The reduction in premium relief from 17.5 per cent to 15 per cent next April will in some cases affect the annual returns on the old bonds. Although one-year bond-holders are safe, those with two-year bonds can expect to see a drop of about 1 per cent from April next year. Three and four-year bonds will see smaller falls of about 0.7 per cent and 0.5 per cent, respectively.

In the past, within the overall monetary limit, it has been possible to pay premiums for more than the permitted amount in a year (therefore tax relief on only the appropriate amount), with the right to claim relief on the balance

More income in retirement

There was quiet celebration on Thursday among partners and the self-employed who have criticized, and with justice, the present legislation which has made it difficult for them to provide themselves with a reasonable pension.

Now, under the Budget proposals, they will not be at a disadvantage compared with the director of a family company or, indeed, the employee belonging to a company scheme.

More can be paid towards a self-employed person's pension—for investment in an insurance company's tax-exempt fund—with full relief of income tax.

The contribution limit for those born in 1916 or later is going up from 15 per cent to 17.4 per cent of net relevant earnings. The monetary limit of £3,000 in any one year is also being swept away—which means that those with high earnings can put aside the full 17.4 per cent.

The meaning of "net relevant earnings" is being altered—so that for most people the contribution is calculated using a larger figure. No longer will personal charges such as mortgage interest or alimony payments be deducted from earnings to arrive at this figure. On the other hand, stock options will join capital allowances and losses as a deduction.

In the past, within the overall monetary limit, it has been possible to pay premiums for more than the permitted amount in a year (therefore tax relief on only the appropriate amount), with the right to claim relief on the balance

Investor's week

Looking for lift-off-later

Impatience makes fools of the best of us, and the important point about this week was not the fall in the FT index from 429.9 to 421.5 but the work the Budget has done to bring the day of a sustained share upswing closer.

We may have to test 350 but I doubt whether we shall stay there long. However, before we see such an upswing we must go down. To reward Browning: The market's way: to rise, it strops.

This sequence of fall and rise is taking an unconscionable time because the Government, false to its professions, has wasted months in letting government spending, interest rates, while stopping interest rates from reaching levels that choke off borrowing.

Now, if the Chancellor's medium-term plan is to be believed, a grip is being taken on state spending while money supply is to be halved to 6 per cent in 1983-84.

The strength of the Budget is that it (nearly) dissolves linger-

ing illusions about the predicament of industry and commerce. Central Statistical Office figures issued just before the Budget had overspent by £4,700m last year. This year the total will be much higher. More than a third of the squeeze will be on government borrowing, not company debts.

Some illusions persist. There are precious few signs of companies setting a fashion in cutting dividends or investment in stocks and plant, and adapting to inflation accounting. BSR, Stone Platt and Weir Group were brave enough recently to chop payoffs, but this week little Appleyard Group, a BL distributor, looked lonely with a halved final dividend. Only publisher William Collins kept its company alive.

Even those who do agree with Sir Geoffrey Howe wonder if practice be curbed. Personally, I suspect that further curbs on consumption could be in store.

The balance of payments is still too weak. American interest rates continue to rise. Institutions, knowing that Mr Tommey Gore-Browne, of the Government's brokers Mullen, must start issuing more gilt-edged stock at a time when inflation is nearing 20 per cent a year, are standing about.

Other brokers are in no hurry to help Mr Gore-Browne either. Many of them are ending their financial years soon. They want commission on stock to fall into the next tax year, not into this. So they postpone buying gifts for clients for a week or two.

Meanwhile, investment and unit trusts are selling shares now to establish tax losses. From April they will pay no gains tax and they will then have nothing to set losses against.

So the immediate outlook for shares is poor. But only the immediate one; it is, as I said, to begin with, all a matter of patience.

up went the half-time dividend from 2.57p to 2.6p.

Again, up went the dividend by 44 per cent at Reckitt & Colman, even though profits fell from £51m to £51m; and the group continues to spend more than comes in from cash flow.

So we are not quite at the bottom of this market. Apart from the illusions of company directors there are illusions of monetarists who really believe that four or five years of squeeze will kill inflation. Others demur.

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Peter Wainwright

HOFF of HEYBRIDGE HEATH



Pre-April 6 action

Use the next few days to the best advantage

After Sir Geoffrey Howe's Budget announcements on Wednesday evening you should be urgently reviewing your financial position. You need to see if there is any action you should take in the short period before the new tax year starts in just over a week on April 6. So here is a checklist of some of the end-of-year items directly affected by the Budget.

1. First, capital gains tax: for the year 1980-81 up to £3,000 of total net gains during the year will be exempt for individuals. Further gains will be taxed at 30 per cent.

This sweeps away the previous 15 per cent and 50 per cent tax bands on total gains below £3,000. As a result, a few more people than otherwise should consider "bed and breakfasting" shares or other investments (ie, selling and repurchasing in order to establish

EDITED BY MARGARET STONE

actical pensions

Why moving jobs could leave you worse off

members of most company pension schemes lose valuable pension rights when they leave a job for whatever reason, whether redundancy, dismissal or plain itchy feet. Few, if any, particularly at the time they are considering a change, realize the magnitude of their potential loss of pension entitlement.

50-year-old member of a typical pension scheme, who completed 15 years' service is earning £9,000 a year at the time of leaving his job, will find that the value of his pension position might be of the order of £13,500 — or 1½ times his gross annual salary. The reason for the loss is pension entitlements at retirement clocked up for each year of service are usually based on salaries at retirement: pension payments payable to leavers (at retirement) are based on salaries at the time of leaving. In an environment characterized by wage and salary inflation, it is likely to be a big difference between the prospective pension based upon retirement earnings and the actual capital cost to an employer of restoring the value of the frozen pension to full earnings-linked status. Loss is scarcely alleviated taking a transfer payment, variable, because these are really equivalent to frozen rights.

The table gives actuarial estimates (based on interest rate, earnings assumptions) to show what it would cost an employer to boost an employee's pension from his job in line with his earnings. In reality employers do not behave statistically, so column (4) is the salary rise a job seeker needs to negotiate to move worthwhile (at the expense of his pension). Obviously, pension schemes are, but the table is based on representative good pension: normal retirement age: benefits are one-sixtieth of average salary for each year of service, widow's pension 1 per cent both before and after retirement and death of twice salary; post-retirement pension increases of 5 per cent; members contribute 5 per cent.

Any one who belongs to a similar scheme will be able to use the table as a guide to rate the value of the loss of pension rights. However, where a scheme is identical, before using the table as a guide for personal decisions, features should be taken into account.

First, because of the tax disadvantages endured by individuals seeking to accumulate savings, the amount of the capital likely to be required to provide an income equivalent to the pension will

Pay rise needed to restore loss of pension position

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Age of man at withdrawal	Pensionable service completed at withdrawal	Value of loss of pension position per £1,000 pa salary	Salary increase (as percentage of old salary) to compensate for (3)
30	5	5,250	13
35	10	5,250	2
40	10	11,500	4
40	5	5,500	2
40	10	11,750	4½
40	15	17,500	7
45	5	5,500	3
45	10	11,900	5½
45	15	16,500	8
45	20	22,000	11
50	5	5,000	3½
50	10	10,000	6½
50	15	15,000	10
50	20	20,000	13
50	25	25,000	17
55	5	4,250	4
55	10	8,500	8
55	15	12,500	12
55	20	16,500	15
55	25	20,750	20
55	30	25,000	24
60	5	2,750	5
60	10	5,500	10
60	15	8,250	16
60	20	11,000	21
60	25	13,750	26
60	30	16,500	32
60	35	19,500	37

Source: Shucksmith & Co.

be greater than the figures shown in the table for men under about the age of 50. For older men it is less. Private free cash gifts, of course, have additional intrinsic value because of its other uses.

Secondly, a significant number of companies have adopted a practice of granting pension increases or other benefit improvements on a discretionary basis. Although the employee has no entitlement to such benefits, the expectation or possibility of them does have some value.

On the other hand, if a person feels that he is likely to leave his job sooner or later in circumstances such that he will have to be satisfied with a frozen pension or equivalent transfer payment, then the value to him of his pension position is little more than the value of the frozen benefits. The loss of pension position, great as it is on paper, will not be very much with a person's age at the time of changing jobs.

It should be emphasized that the increase in salary must be permanent. In the example of the man aged 50, who had completed 15 years' pensionable service, he would have to earn 10 per cent more in the new job during the remainder of his working life to break even.

The loss of pension position on changing jobs often has a substantial value: in the scheme illustrated it is about half annual gross salary for each five years of service. A loss of this magnitude is well worth recovering from the former employer, if at all possible. However, the loss of pension position is likely to be of relatively small value compared with the value of future career earnings, except at older ages, and although important, is unlikely to be a crucial factor in a decision whether to change jobs for people aged under 45 or with less than 10 years' service.

Tom Shucksmith

Role of the executor

Readers' Forum

This specialist readers' service has been completed with the help of John Drummond, Vera Di Palma, Ronald Irving and Eric Brunet.

It is possible for your will to undergo any change in the investments you have selected. However, this is untrue since it means your trustees managing the trust funds to the best advantage of all the beneficiaries. Your solicitor is irresponsible in recommending that trustees be given full discretion to reinvest as they see fit.

You direct otherwise, and our rates of inflation consider, the result could be that your son would benefit by highest rates but, on his death, your grand-children would find the capital value of chosen investments greatly reduced by inflation.

The answer is to make your one of the trustees and the choice of investments to him. For example, he may be a high wage earner and need the income; he will be able to reinvest the benefit of your grand-children.

You need have no fear that trustees will reinvest least or carelessly. If they key will have to make good loss to the beneficiaries, incidentally, not provide a trustee and trusteeship service.

At my lawn-mower off for the winter. On return I presented with a two page detailing the repairs carried out. The cost was five times what I had expected for cleaning. The machine had been in working order when

My wife terminated her employment as a local government office in September 1979. Under the local government superannuation scheme, she is entitled to take a refund of her contributions in respect of her service to April 5, 1978. She applied at the end of October 1979, that she must wait one month before applying for a refund. It is now four months since she resigned and no refund has yet been received, despite reminders. When it does arrive, what obligation is the local authority to pay interest on the amount for the period of the delay and the initial one month?

Pen-Gee: Formal arrangements to send a refund of her contributions in respect of her service to April 5, 1978. She applied at the end of October 1979, that she must wait one month before applying for a refund. It is now four months since she resigned and no refund has yet been received, despite reminders. When it does arrive, what obligation is the local authority to pay interest on the amount for the period of the delay and the initial one month?

If your instructions were clear, that is, only to clean your lawn-mower, then you are liable to pay no more than a reasonable sum for having it cleaned. You need not pay the cost of any repairs they saw fit to carry out, since you did not authorize them. Even though they considered certain repairs necessary, or even essential, they were not permitted to go beyond the scope of your original instructions, without referring back to you for authorization.

However, if you asked them to put the machine in working order, this would be taken as authorizing any repairs incidental thereto. It may be difficult to prove the scope of your instructions, unless you gave them in writing. The practical situation is that you cannot get your lawn-mower back until this issue has been resolved since, in law, they have a lien on it until payment.

You should write to them, stressing that the mistake is theirs and sending a cheque to cover the cost of cleaning only, and demanding the return of your machine. If they refuse, you should go to your local county court office and issue a summons for arbitration of the dispute. This will involve a private discussion between the parties and the registrar as arbitrator, so even if you lose, the company has been told and the premiums continuing to be paid.

At my lawn-mower off for the winter. On return I presented with a two page detailing the repairs carried out. The cost was five times what I had expected for cleaning. The machine had been in working order when

I lost my wife twelve months ago. She had an endowment insurance policy on my life for £300 payable on my death or at 65. I have six children aged 9 to 18. Will it operate for the benefit of the children if I die? (MM, Dagenham).

If the policy was arranged by your late wife on your life, it would have formed part of her assets at her death. To whom did it pass in her will? If it was to yourself, you are the owner and for the policy to continue on the same basis you should advise the company and continue to pay the premiums. If you should die before reaching the age of 65, the claim value of the policy will then be paid into your estate for distribution with your other assets. The points to check, therefore, are who owns the policy, whether the company has been told and the premiums continuing to be paid.

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FINANCIAL NEWS AND MARKET REPORTS

Stock markets

Equities lower after Wall Street setback

Despite a brave attempt to halt the rot, the stock market finished the first leg of the three-week-long account on a dull note yesterday.

Equities continued to drift lower in the wake of the gilt market, disillusioned with the Budget, and nervous over the

although the general tone became firmer with most prices off the bottom the FT Index still closed 1.6 off at 421.5.

Gilt had another quiet session with dealers still worried over the absence of any sign of a reduction in the minimum lending rate.

In the meantime, longs again opened easier, falling £1, while mediums slipped by around £1 before closing £1 down on the day. In shorts the story was much the same with sporadic selling pushing prices lower throughout the list. By the close falls of around £1 were being reported.

In equities leading industrials had another quiet session after initial confusion following the latest setback on Wall Street. Prices traded at narrow levels throughout the day but were generally easier.

Selling continued in Distillers, where the market was

forced to mop up 250,000 shares after one seller decided he had enough. However, after an initial bout of indigestion market men reported that most of the stock had been disposed of although the price slipped 2p to 195p.

Shares of Fisons came in for a rough time, falling 13p to

254p, ICI closed 4p off at 362p and Dunlop eased another 2p to 55p after reports that a large amount of stock had been

overhanging the market most of this week. Unilever fell 3p to 408p while Glaxo slipped 2p to 240p and Beecham 1p to 115p.

Shares of Imperial Group rose 3p to 79p after suggestions that the group's bid for Howard Johnson of the United States might not proceed until certain questions are answered.

There is a large force of shareholders opposed to the deal which they regard as expensive.

News that Ladbrokes

had sold five of its casinos to Reo Stakis, down 1p to 55p, boosted the shares 7p to 129p.

In stores the denial from Debenhams that there was somebody wanting to make a bid wiped 3p from the shares at 80p while United Drapery Stores slipped 1p to 65p amid speculation that it had sold most of its 5 per cent stake in Grattans, which was 2p lower at 62p.

Disappointing figures from House of Fraser and reports of a boardroom rift over the dividend wiped 6p from the shares at 128p. Combined English Stores retreated 3p to 33p ahead of figures next week.

Among companies reporting, the interim loss and passed dividend at Lake & Elliot resulted in the shares tumbling 12p to 25p. Also retreating after disappointing trading statements were F.C. Finance, down 5p to 56p, Lister, off 7p to 53p, and Wm. Boulton, 1p to 12½p. But higher profits and a one-for-one scrip saw Bernard Matthews climb 2p to 295p.

Shaw's Ware, was another weak spot, slipping 8p to 150p after full-year figures, which were selling at 15p from Caen at 33p. Equity turnover at 33p on March 27, was £142,318m (£17,372 bar-gains), according to the Exchange Telegraph, were Turner & Newall, B.A.T.s, BP, Burmah, Shell, Beecham, Coats Patons and Courtaulds.

Latest results

Company	Sales £m	Profits £m	Earnings per share	Div. pence	Year's date
Lord or Fin. Ltd	—	0.01(+0.09)	—	3.0(3.0)	3.0(3.0)
Badalpuk Tea (F)	—	0.05(+0.54)	—	—	—(—)
Wm. Boulton (I)	13.06(11.4)	0.39(0.75)	2.1(2.1)	0.5(0.5)	9/5 (—1.35)
English Prop. (F)	—	—	—	—	—(—)
Chas. Ears (F)	1.94(1.65)	0.54(0.62)	9.3(9.3)	2.1(3.7*)	16/6 (—1.25)
Elys (Wm.) (F)	6.94(5.63)	0.34(0.31)	15.6(12.4)	3.5(2.33)	2/6 (4.5)(3.07)
Fin & Ind. (I)	0.13(0.09)	0.05(0.05)	2.1(2.0)	—	—(—1.2)
FC Finance (F)	60.56(56.58)	0.43(1.82)	4.2(4.2)	2.2(2.0)	24/5 (2.2)
Home C News (F)	5.85(7.49)	1.02(1.05)	12.5(12.5)	6.5(6.5)	19/6 (5.95)
Postbox (I) (F)	5.34(4.42)	0.57(0.71)	13.81(13.25)	3.3(3.3)	20/5 (4.54*)
Lister & Elliot (I)	9.45(10.34)	4.67(5.07)	12.48(12.05*)	—	—(4.7)
New Len Prop. (F)	—	1.55(1.18)	—	6.0(—)	9.0(7.25)
Lister & Co (I)	19.44(18.91)	1.04(1.41)	1.0(1.1)	—	—(—1.5)
Macallan-G (I)	16.1(15.32)	0.24(0.26)	6.4(6.4)	2.2(2.03)	28/4 (—5.9)
Ed. Matthews & Co (I)	1.22(0.06)	0.28(0.73)	3.38(10.48)	—	16/5 (—0.28)
Scot. Met. Prop. (F)	—	1.58(0.81)	—	1.25(0.91)	15/8 (—2.51)
Shaw's Ware (F)	15.11(13.92)	0.17(0.91)	46.6(29.9)	2.06(1.65)	— (3.2)(2.66)
Flotide Group (F)	16.31(13.67)	1.56(4.91)	31.4(16.7)	14.5(4.0)	14.5(4.0)

Stock Exchange Prices **Dull tone persists**

ACCOUNT DAYS: Dealings Began, March 24. Dealings End, April 11. § Contango Day, April 14. Settlement Day, April 21

6 Forward bargains are permitted on two previous days

- Ex dividend, a Ex all, b Forecast dividend, c Corrected price, d Interim payment passed, f Price at suspension, g Dividend and yield exclude a special payment. B Bid for company, k Pro forma figures, l Forecast earnings, p Ex dividend distribution, r Ex rights, s Ex scrip or share split, t Tax free, v Price adjusted for late dealings. . . . No significant data.

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SIMON Peter said unto him, "Lo, I send thee a man, whose name is Jesus. Go thou before him, whither so I send thee, and thou shalt not follow me now; but thou shall follow me after." St. John 3: 36.

BIRTHS

ADAM—On March 27th, in Lymington, Hampshire, a son, Benjamin and Christopher—a son, Benjamin.

BROADBREAD—On March 25th, in Lymington, Hampshire, a daughter, Amy—daughter.

CARTER—On March 25th, in Tunbridge Wells, Kent, a son, Tony—son, Tony—a daughter.

EDWARDS—To Francis and Tim—Tim a son (Gareth James).

NORTON—On 27th, March, at Wimborne, Dorset, a son, David and wife, Linda—a daughter.

LACEY—On March 27th, a daughter, Dorothy, and Anthony, a daughter.

Benedicta.

MORRISON—On March 27th, to Jenny and Tony—a son, for Katharine and Abigail.

FARKER—Phyllis, and Robert—a daughter, Claire Victoria, born 29th March, 1980, at the West Kent Hospital, Maidstone.

and Tim, a daughter.

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and Tim, a daughter.

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